Sri Bhaktyaloka

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Six Faults That Destroy Bhakti

Atyahara Overeating or too much collecting

In his *Sri Upadesamrta,* Srila Rupa Gosvami has written the following verse:

atyaharah prayasas ca prajalpo niyamagrahah jana-sangas ca laulyam ca sadbhir bhaktir vinasyati

“One's devotional service is spoiled when he becomes too entangled in the following six activities: (1) *atyahara,* eating more than necessary or collecting more funds than required; (2) *prayasa,* overendeavoring for mundane things that are very difficult to obtain; (3) *prajalpa,* talking unnecessarily about mundane subject matters; (4) *niyamagraha,* practicing the scriptural rules and regulations only for the sake of following them and not for the sake of spiritual advancement, or rejecting the rules and regulations of the scriptures and working independently or whimsically; (5) *jana-sanga,* associating with worldly-minded persons who are not interested in Krsna consciousness; and (6) *laulyam,* being greedy for mundane achievements.”

It is most important to consider the deep meaning of this verse. For anyone who wants to engage in pure devotional service, it is especially necessary to follow the instructions of this verse. For one who neglects to follow these instructions, attaining devotion to Lord Hari is extremely rare. We are hereby elaborating the meaning of this verse for the benefit of those who have a strong desire to attain pure devotional service. In this verse six impediments to devotional service are mentioned—*atyahara, prayasa, prajalpa, niyamagraha, jana-sanga,* and *laulya.* We will separately discuss each of these six items. In this small chapter only the meaning of the word *atyahara* is being discussed.

Many people may think that the word *atyahara* refers only to overeating, but this is not so. It is explained in the first verse of *Upadesamrta:*

vaco vegam manasah krodha-vegam jihva-vegam udaropastha-vegam

etan vegan yo visaheta dhirah sarvam apimam prthivim sa sisyat

“A sober person who can tolerate the urge to speak, the mind's demands, the

actions of anger, and the urges of the tongue, belly, and genitals is qualified to make disciples all over the world.”

In this regard, the urge of the tongue is the desire to taste foodstuffs. The urge of the stomach is the desire to overeat. If we understand the word *atyahara* in the second verse as overeating, the fault of repetition occurs in this condensed collection of essential instructions. Therefore it is the duty of the learned readers to find other meanings for the word *atyahara* as used by the most grave Rupa Gosvami.

Although *bhojana,* or eating, is the principle meaning of the word *aharal,* the word *bhojana* also means to enjoy the objects of the five senses. Form by the eyes, sound by the ears, smell by the nose, taste by the tongue, feeling of heat and cold, soft and hard by the touch—in this way, the five senses enjoy. This type of material enjoyment is compulsory for an embodied soul.
Without enjoying the sense objects, a living entity cannot survive. As soon as the living entity gives up sense enjoyment, he leaves his body. Therefore, giving up sense enjoyment is only a figment of the imagination, it can never be applied in practice. Lord Sri Krsna instructed Arjuna in the *Bhagavad-gfta* (3.5-6):

na hi kascit ksanam api jatu tisthaty akarma-krt karyate hy avasah karma sarvah prakrti-jair gunaih

karmendriyani samyamya   ya aste manasa smaran

indriyarthan vimudhatma   mithyacarah sa ucyate

“Everyone is forced to act helplessly according to the qualities he has acquired from the modes of material nature; therefore no one can refrain from doing something, not even for a moment. One who restrains the senses of action but whose mind dwells on sense objects certainly deludes himself and is called a pretender.”

Since maintaining one's life is not possible without action, one must work to maintain his life. If such activities are done in the mood of enjoyment, then one's qualification as a human is lost and he becomes like an animal. Therefore if one can transform all his bodily activities into activities favorable to the devotional service of the Lord, then that is *bhakti-yoga.* Again, the Lord says in the *Gita* (6.1617, 5.8-9):

naty-asnatas tu yogo 'sti na caikantam anasnatah na cati-svapna-sflasya jagrato naiva carjuna

yuktahara-viharasya yukta-cestasya karmasu yukta-svapnavabodhasya yogo bhavati duhkha-ha

naiva kincit karomiti pasyan srnvan sprsan jighrann

yukto manyeta tattva-vit

asnan gacchan svapan svasan

pralapan visrjan grhnann unmisan nimisann api indriyanindriyarthesu vartanta iti dharayan

“There is no possibility of one's becoming a yogi, O Arjuna, if one eats too much, or eats too little, sleeps too much, or does not sleep enough. He who is temperate in his habits of eating, sleeping, working, and recreation can mitigate all material pains by practicing the yoga system. A person in the divine consciousness, although engaged in seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving about, sleeping, and breathing, always knows within himself that he actually does nothing at all. Because while speaking, evacuating, receiving, or opening or closing his eyes, he always knows that only the material senses are engaged with their objects and that he is aloof from them.”

Although these instructions are effective for *jnams,* still, their purport is favorable for devotional service. The concluding verse of *Bhagavad-gita* explains about *saranagati*, or full surrender. Keeping this in mind, one should renounce fruitive activities and philosophical speculation and accept sense objects as the Lord's mercy. This is known as pure devotional service. Therefore Srila Rupa Gosvamt has said in the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (2.255-256):

anasaktasya visayan yatharham upayunjatah nirbandhah krsna-sambandhe yuktam vairagyam ucyate prapancikataya buddhya hari-sambandhi-vastunah mumuksubhih parityago vairagyam phalgu kathyate

“When one is not attached to anything, but at the same time accepts everything in relation to Krsna, one is rightly situated above possessiveness. On the other hand, one who rejects everything without knowledge of its relationship to Krsna is not as complete in his renunciation.”

The purport of these two verses is repeated in *Sri Upadesamrta* by the instruction to reject *atyahara*. The purport is that if one accepts sense objects in the spirit of enjoyment, that is *atyahara.* But if sense objects are accepted as the Lord's mercy and only as far as required and favorable for devotional service, then it is not *atyahara.* If sense objects are honestly accepted as the Lord's mercy, then *yukta-vairagya* is easily attained. Srtman Mahaprabhu's order is to accept sense objects without attachment and chant Krsna's name. Don't endeavor for palatable foodstuffs and fine clothes. Accept the sanctified *bhagavata-prasada* that is easily obtainable. This is the devotee's lifestyle. Whatever is required, take only that. Taking more or less will not yield auspicious results. If the practitioner takes or accumulates more than necessary, his spiritual life will be lost due to his being controlled by material mellows. If he does not properly accumulate, then the body, which is his means of worship, will not be protected.

The purport of the instruction to tolerate the urges of the tongue and belly mentioned in the first verse is this: The materialist easily becomes greedy to enjoy the finest tastes, and being afflicted by hunger, he becomes extremely agitated and enthusiastic to eat the available foodstuffs. This is a material urge. Whenever this type of urge will arise, it should be controlled by the cultivation of devotional service. The injunction to reject *atyahara* mentioned in the second verse is a constitutional rule for the practitioner. The injunction of the first verse is conditional, and the injunction of the second is constitutional.

There is one more thing to be said. All these instructions have two different types of applications—for the householders and for the renunciates. Householders can collect in order to maintain their family members. They should earn their livelihood and save according to religious principles. With this savings they should serve the Lord, the devotees, guests, family members, and themselves. If a householder collects more than his requirement, then this is an impediment in his devotional service and in his achieving the Lord's mercy. So saving too much and earning too much are both *atyahara*—there is no doubt. A renunciate will not collect at all. If he is not satisfied by the alms he obtains everyday, then he is guilty of *atyahara*. After getting nice foodstuffs, if he eats more than he needs, then he is guilty of *atyahara*. Therefore the householders and renunciates should consider these facts carefully, and after giving up *atyahara*, when they engage in devotional service they will attain Krsna's mercy.

Prayasa Overendeavoring

If *prayasa* is not given up, devotion will never arise. The word *prayasa* means endeavor, useless labor. Spiritual life is nothing other than pure devotion unto the Supreme Lord. Devotion cannot be defined by any symptoms other than full surrender and subordination unto the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord. Full surrender and subordination are the natural, eternal constitutional duties of the living entities. Therefore, only devotional service is the natural propensity or inherent occupation. In one's inherent occupation there is no need of *prayasa;* still, in the living entity's conditioned state there is need for a small amount of *prayasa* in order to cultivate devotional service. Except this little *prayasa,* all other kinds of *prayasa* are unfavorable for devotional service. *Prayasa* is of two kinds—*jnana-prayasa* and *karma-prayasa.* In *jnana-prayasa* the feeling of oneness, or *kevaladvaita,* arises. This is also known as *sayujya,* merging, or *brahma-nirvana*, absorption in the Supreme. *Jnana-prayasa* is hostile to spiritual life; this is explained in the Vedic literature, *Mundaka Upanisad* (3.2.3), in the following words:

nayam atma pravacanena labhyo na medhasa na bahuna srutena

yam evaisa vrnute tena labhyas tasyaisa atma vivrnute tanum svam

“The Supreme Lord is not obtained by expert explanations, by vast intelligence, or even by much hearing. He is obtained only by one whom He Himself chooses. To such a person, He manifests His own form.” Therefore devotion is the only way to attain the lotus feet of the Lord. In the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (10.14.3) Brahma says to Lord Krsna:

jnane prayasam udapasya namanta eva jivanti san-mukharitam bhavadiya-vartam

sthane sthitah sruti-gatam tanu-van-manobhir ye prayaso 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyam

“Lord Brahma said, O my Lord Krsna, a devotee who abandons *[jnana-prayasa*]* the path of empiric philosophical speculation aimed at merging in the existence of the Supreme and engages himself in hearing Your glories and activities from a bona fide sadhu, or saint, and who lives an honest life in the occupational engagement of his social life, can conquer Your sympathy and mercy even though You are *ajita,* or unconquerable.”

In order to further clarify *prayasa,* Lord Brahma says:

sreyah-srtim bhaktim udasya te vibho klisyanti ye kevala-bodha-labdhaye tesam asau klesala eva sisyate nanyad yatha sthula-tusavaghatinam

“'My dear Lord, devotional service unto You is the only auspicious path. If one gives it up simply for speculative knowledge or the understanding that these living beings are spirit souls and the material world is false, he undergoes a great deal of trouble. He only gains troublesome and inauspicious activities. His endeavors are like beating a husk that is already devoid of rice. One's labor becomes fruitless.” The philosophy of monism does not originate in the Absolute Truth; it is only a demoniac provision. Glorification of the knowledge of one's relationship with the Lord is often heard. That knowledge is pure and spontaneous—there is no need of *prayasa.* The knowledge given in the *Catuh-slok#* [the four main *Bhagavatam* verses] is *acintya bhedabheda,* inconceivably, simultaneously one and different.

This knowledge is naturally dormant in the heart of the living entity. The Lord is like a spiritual sun, and the living entities are like molecular particles of the sun's rays. The living entity cannot remain in his constitutional form without being subordinate to the Lord, therefore servitorship of the Lord is his constitutional duty. Cultivation of this constitutional duty is the nature of the living entity. This is the spontaneous—devoid of *prayasa—dharma*, or duty, of the living entity. Although in the conditioned state this *dharma* is almost dormant and is awakened by *sadhana*, or spiritual practice, still the *prayasa* found in devotional practices is not like that found in the paths of karma and *jnana.* If one takes shelter of the holy name with some respect, then within a short time the obstacles due to ignorance are removed and one's constitutional happiness is reawakened. But if one gives a place to *jnana-prayasa,* then he has to suffer more. And if *jnana-prayasa* is renounced in the association of devotees, then that is a devotional endeavor. The Lord says in the *Bhagavad-gita* (12.2-5):

mayy avesya mano ye mam nitya-yukta upasate sraddhaya parayopetas te me yuktatama matah

ye tv aksaram anirdesyam avyaktam paryupasate sarvatra-gam acintyam ca kuta-stham acalam dhruvam

sanniyamyendriya-gramam te prapnuvanti mam eva

sarvatra sama-buddhayah sarva-bhuta-hite ratal

kleso 'dhikataras tesam avyaktasakta-cetasam avyakta hi gatir duhkham dehavadbhir avapyate

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Those who fix their minds on My personal form and are always engaged in worshiping Me with great and transcendental faith are considered by Me to be most perfect. But those who fully worship the unmanifested, that which lies beyond the perception of the senses, the all-pervading, inconceivable, unchanging, fixed, and immovable—the impersonal conception of the Absolute Truth—by controlling the various senses and being equally disposed to everyone, such persons, engaged in the welfare of all, at last achieve Me. For those whose minds are attached to the unmanifested, impersonal feature of the Supreme, advancement is very troublesome. To make progress in that discipline is always difficult for those who are embodied."

In *karma-prayasa* there is also no benefit. In the First Canto of the *Srimad Bhagavatam* it is said:

dharmah svanusthitah pumsam visvaksena-kathasu yah

notpadayed yadi ratim srama eva hi kevalam

"The occupational activities a man performs according to his own position are only so much useless labor, or *prayasa,* if they do not provoke attraction for the message of the Personality of Godhead." Therefore *karma-prayasa* is contrary to devotional principles in the same way as *jnana-prayasa.* The conclusion is that *karma-prayasa* and *jnana-prayasa* are very detrimental. But a devotee who desires to properly pass his life still accepts his duties according to *varnasrama,* as those duties are favorable to devotional service and counted as part of devotional service. All these activities are no longer called karma. In these activities, the *svanistha* devotees, or devotees addicted to their own line of devotion, bring karma and its results within the realm of devotional service. The *parinisthita* devotees, or devotees fully addicted to devotional service, perform pious activities that are not contrary to devotional principles only to attract people. The devotees who are *nirapeksa*, or neutral, accept activities favorable for devotional service without caring for popular approval.

Jnana-prayasa and its resultant *prayasa* for the liberation of merging with the Lord are extremely contrary to devotional principles. If *astanga-yoga-prayasa*

aims at mystic powers and liberation, then it is also extremely contrary to devotional principles. The rules for devotional practice and the knowledge of the living entities' relationship of simultaneous oneness and difference are most natural and therefore devoid of *prayasa.* This type of activity and knowledge is only accepted as a means. If they are accepted as the goal, then they become the source of fault. I will explain this further under *niyamagraha*. The hard labor for activities like visiting holy places is *prayasa* that is unfavorable for devotional service. If, however, one goes to the places of Krsna's pastimes with a greedy desire to awaken his ecstatic love for Krsna and to associate with the devotees, then this is certainly devotional service—not useless *prayasa.* Following the vows of devotional service is not useless *prayasa*, they are all accepted as part of the process of devotional service. The *prayasa* for serving the Vaisnavas is not *prayasa*; for greed to associate with one's own peers destroys faults in the form of desires to associate with worldly-minded people. The *prayasa* for temple worship is a spontaneous manifestation of the heart's emotions. The *prayasa* for activities like *sankirtana* is only meant to open one's heart to chanting the Lord's holy names; it is therefore extremely natural.

There is no need for *prayasa* in renunciation; because when devotion to Krsna arises in the heart, the living entity easily becomes disinterested in everything other than Krsna. The *Srimad Bhagavatam* (1.2.7) says:

vasudeve bhagavati bhakti-yogah prayojitah janayaty asu vairagyam jnanam ca yad ahaitukam

“By rendering devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna, one immediately acquires causeless knowledge [or knowledge of eternally perfect servitorship of the Lord*] and detachment [or detachment free from *prayasa**] from the world.” So when one gives up *jnana,* karma, and *vairagya prayasa* and engages in devotional practices, then the obstacles of *jnana,* karma, yoga, and *vairagya* cannot pull one down. Therefore it is established in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.2.42): *bhaktih paresanubhavo viraktir anyatra caisa trika eka-kalah*—“devotion, direct experience of the Supreme Lord, and detachment from other things—these three occur simultaneously for one who has taken shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

When a devotee humbly and without duplicity chants and remembers the holy names of Krsna, then real intelligence easily awakens in this way: “I am spiritual particle, servant of Krsna; Krsna is my eternal Lord; surrender to

Krsna's lotus feet is my eternal nature; this world is like a traveler's rest-house; and to be attached to anything of this world will not give me eternal happiness." Like this, a practitioner soon attains all perfection. *Jnana-prayasa, karma-prayasa, yoga-prayasa, mukti-prayasa,* as well as overendeavoring for material enjoyment, worldly achievements, and association with materialistic people are all hostile principles for one who has taken shelter of the holy name. By these different forms of *prayasa,* one's devotional service is ruined. The *prayasa* for attaining *pratistha,* or fame, is the lowest of all kinds of *prayasa.* Although it is the lowest, it is unavoidable for many. And that also should be given up by the simple process of devotional service. Therefore Sanatana Gosvamt has stated in the *Hari-bhakti-vilasa,* the concluding verse:

sarva tyage 'py aheyayah sarvanartha bhuvas ca te kuryuh pratisthavisthaya yatnam asparsane varam

"Even if one can give up all material desires, the desire for fame is very difficult to give up. This desire for fame, which is compared to stool, is the root cause of all *anarthas.* Therefore, one should carefully avoid touching this stool-like desire for fame." This instruction is extremely serious. The devotee should follow this exclusive duty with special care.

A practicing devotee should pass his life in a natural occupation that is favorable to devotional service, and he should chant and remember the holy names with knowledge of his relationship with the Lord. This process of worship without *prayasa* again has two different kinds of applications—for householders and for renunciates. Making *varnasrama* favorable to devotional service, the householder should pass his life engaged in devotional service free from *prayasa*. They should earn and save only to easily maintain the family members. If they always remember that worshiping Hari is the only purpose of life, then they will never fall into illusion. In happiness and distress, in good fortune and bad, in waking and sleep— in every condition—worshiping Hari will quickly be perfected. And the renunciate should not save at all. He should maintain his body by daily begging alms and thus engage in devotional service. They should not stay in any enterprise. By entering into enterprise, he is at fault. The more he worships the Lord with humility and simplicity, the more he will understand Krsna, by His mercy. As stated by Lord Brahma in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (10.14.8):

tat te 'nukampam susamlksamano bhunjana evatma-krtam vipakam

hrd-vag-vapurbhir vidadhan namas te jlveta yo mukti-pade sa daya-bhak

“My dear Lord, one who constantly waits for Your causeless mercy to be bestowed upon him and who goes on suffering the reactions of his past misdeeds, offering You respectful obeisances from the core of his heart, is surely eligible for liberation, for it has become his rightful claim,” Nothing is achieved by *jnana-prayasa,* but one can know Krsna only by His mercy, Therefore *Srimad Bhagavatam* (10,14,29) says:

athapi te deva padambuja-dvaya-prasada-lesanugrhlta eva hi

janati tattvam bhagavan-mahimno na canya eko 'pi ciram vicinvan

“My Lord, if one is favored by even a slight trace of the mercy of Your lotus feet, he can understand the greatness of Your personality, But those who speculate to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead are unable to know You, even though they continue to study the *Vedas* for many years,”

If one takes shelter of the holy names with humility, then by the mercy of the Lord—without *prayasa*—all knowledge of the Absolute Truth that should be known awakens within the heart of the simple devotee, This knowledge is never attained by independent *prayasa,*

Prajalpa Idle talking

Talking with one another is called *jalpana* or *prajalpa,* Nowadays in this world godlessness is so prominent that conversing with others means godless talk, Therefore it is not profitable for a practicing devotee to engage in *jalpana,* There can, however, be many kinds of *jalpana* in the cultivation of devotional service, They are all auspicious for the devotees, Srila Rupa Gosvami has written in his *Karpanya-panjika-stotra:*

tathapy asmin kadacid vamadhlsau nama-jalpini

avadya-vrnda-nistari- namabhasau prasldatam

Devotees recite the purport of this verse in the following words:

tathapi e dma-jane, yadi nama-uccarane,

namabhasa karila jlvane

sarva-dosa-nivarana, duhun-nama-sanjalpana,

prasade praslda dui jane

“While chanting the holy name of the Lord, if a wretched person in his lifetime achieves *namabhasa,* or a glimpse of offenseless chanting, then all his faults are destroyed and Their Lordships become pleased with him,”

Klrtana, offering prayers, and reciting the scriptures are all *jalpana*; but when these are performed with a favorable mood and devoid of material desire, then they are all cultivation of Krsna consciousness, Therefore the conclusion is this: All *prajalpas* that are unfavorable to Krsna's service are adverse to devotional service, The practitioner should carefully give up *prajalpa,* There is no fault in the activities of the *mahajanas,* The *mahajanas* have respectfully engaged in *prajalpa* (favorable to devotional service), and this is our only duty. Sometimes puffed-up devotees advise that all types of *prajalpa* should be given up. But we are followers of Srila Rupa Gosvami; being followers of Rupa Gosvami we will always stick to the path shown by the sadhus who are following his instructions. In the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu,* as quoted from the *Skanda Purana,* it is said:

sa mrgyah sreyasam hetuh panthah santapa-varjitah

anavapta-sramam purve yena santah pratisthire

“One should strictly follow the easy path that the previous *mahajanas* have accepted. That path bestows great auspiciousness and is devoid of all misery.”

Our *mahajana's* path is that which was shown by Srila Vyasadeva, Sukadeva Gosvami, Prahlada Maharaja, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and His associates. We are not to leave aside that path to follow the instructions of new puffed-up devotees. All the *mahajanas* have respected that *prajalpa* which nourishes devotion to Hari. We will discuss this in the appropriate place.

Godless *prajalpas* are impediments to devotional service. They are of many types. Useless talks, arguments, gossip, debates, fault-finding in others, speaking falsehoods, blaspheming devotees, and worldly talk are all called *prajalpa.*

Useless talk is extremely detrimental. Practicing devotees should discuss topics of Lord Hari in the association of other devotees and remember Hari's name, form, qualities, and pastimes in a secluded place without uselessly wasting time. In the *Bhagavad-gita* (10.8-9) it is said:

aham sarvasya prabhavo mattah sarvam pravartate iti matva bhajante mam budha bhava-samanvitah mac-citta mad-gata-prana bodhayantah parasparam kathayantas ca mam nityam tusyanti ca ramanti ca

"I am the source of all spiritual and material worlds. Everything emanates from Me. The wise who perfectly know this engage in My devotional service and worship Me with all their hearts. The thoughts of My pure devotees dwell in Me, their lives are fully devoted to My service, and they derive great satisfaction and bliss from always enlightening one another and conversing about Me."

Also in the *Gita* (9.14) it says:

satatam kirtayanto mam yatantas ca drdha-vratah namasyantas ca mam bhaktya nitya-yukta upasate

"Always chanting My glories, endeavoring with great determination, bowing down before Me, these great souls perpetually worship Me with devotion." In this way the practicing devotee should cultivate unalloyed devotion. If they spend their days and nights uselessly talking with materialists, then the Lord's instruction, "always chanting My glories," will not be followed. In newspapers there is so much useless talk. For the practicing devotee to read newspapers is a great loss. But if there are topics about pure devotees described in the newspaper, then that can be read. After finishing their meal, mundane people normally smoke and engage in useless talk with other godless people. It is certainly difficult for them to become followers of Srila Rupa Gosvami. Reading novels is the same. But if one gets a novel with a story like that of Puranjana in the *Srimad Bhagavatam*, then reading that is not an impediment, rather it is beneficial.

Argument is a *prajalpa* that is adverse to devotional service. All the arguments of the followers of *nyaya* and *vaisesika* are simply godless quarrels. They do not yield any result other than wasting the mind's strength and increasing one's restlessness. In the *Vedas (Katha Upanisad* 1.2.9) it is said: *naisa tarkena matir apaneya*—"This intelligence cannot be attained by argument." The living entity's

proper discretion is eternally established in his natural intelligence. That discretion naturally flows towards the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord. But by arguing about directions, places, mistakes, and illusions, the heart becomes tough. Then natural discretion no longer remains. By accepting the Vedic Dasamula instructions and arguing accordingly, one's mind does not become wicked. What is good, what is bad— when such deliberations are based on the *Vedas*, that is no longer *prajalpa.* That is why in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 25.153) Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has given the instruction: *ataeva bhagavata karaha vicara*—"Study *Srmad Bhagavatam* very scrutinizingly." Discussions to establish the knowledge of one's relationship with the Lord are not *prajalpa.* Those who conquer the assembly by useless arguments do not reach any conclusion; therefore it is certainly one's duty to give up such logician's association. This is confirmed in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 12.183) by Sri Vasudeva Sarvabhauma, who said:

tarkika-srgala-sange bheu-bheu kari

sei mukhe ebe sada kahi 'krsna' hari'

"In the association of the jackals known as logicians, I simply continued to bark a resounding bheu bheu.' Now, from the same mouth I am chanting the holy names Krsna and Hari."

Those who are accustomed to discuss spiritual matters should remember the words of the Varanasi *sannyas#* as found in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 25.43):

paramartha-vicara gela, kari matra vada'

kahan mukti paba, kahan krsnera prasada

"The atheists, headed by the Mayavadi philosophers, do not care for liberation or Krsna's mercy. They simply continue to put forward false arguments and countertheories to atheistic philosophy, not considering or engaging in spiritual matters." Useless arguments arise from envy or pride, aversion or attachment to sense gratification, or foolishness or self-pride. Quarrelsome people also become intoxicated by useless arguments. While discussing topics of the Lord and His devotees the practicing devotee should always be careful to avoid useless arguments.

Talking without reason about other people is extremely adverse to devotional service. Many people talk about others to establish their own reputation. Being envious, some people are accustomed to discuss others' character. The minds of those who are busy in such topics can never be fixed on the lotus feet of Krsna. Talking about others should be rejected in all respects. But in the practice of devotional service there are many favorable topics that are faultless, even though they are about others. In order to completely renounce talking about others, one needs to live in the forest. The two different types of practicing devotees are the householders and the renunciates. Because the renunciates have no business whatsoever with sense enjoyment, they can give up talking about others in all respects. But because a householder is engaged in earning, saving, protecting, and maintaining the family, he cannot completely give up talking about others. It is best for him to live in a Krsna conscious family. When all one's material activities are related with Krsna, then even his unavoidable talk about others becomes sinless and a part of devotional practice in relation to Krsna. He should not talk about others in a way that is detrimental to anyone. He should talk about others only whatever little is necessary in his Krsna conscious family. He should not talk about others without reason. Moreover, when a guru enlightens his disciple on some topic, then unless he occasionally talks about others, his instruction may not be clear. When previous *mahajanas* have talked about others in this way, there is merit in such talk, not fault. As Sukadeva Gosvamt said in *Srimad Bhagavatam* (2.1.3-4):

nidraya hriyate naktam diva carthehaya rajan

dehapatya-kalatradisv tesam pramatto nidhanam

vyavayena ca va vayah kutumba-bharanena va

atma-sainyesv asatsv api pasyann api na pasyati

“The lifetime of such an envious householder is passed at night either in sleeping or in sex indulgence, and in the daytime either in making money or maintaining family members. Persons devoid of *atma-tattva* do not inquire into the problems of life, being too attached to the fallible soldiers like the body, children, and wife. Although sufficiently experienced, they still do not see their inevitable destruction.” Although Sukadeva Gosvamt talks about the materialists in order to instruct his disciple, he is not considered a *prajalpi*. Therefore such activities should be considered beneficial. Again, in order to instruct His own

disciples, Srt Caitanya Mahaprabhu spoke about pseudo-renunciates in the following words from the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 2.117, 120, 124):

prabhu kahe,—vairagi kare prakrti sambhasana dekhite na paron ami tahara vadana

ksudra-jiva saba markata-vairagya kariya indriya carana bule prakrti' sambhasiya

prabhu kahe,—mora vasa nahe mora mana prakrti-sambhasi vairagi na kare darsana

"The Lord replied: I cannot tolerate seeing the face of a person who has accepted the renounced order of life but who still talks intimately with a woman. There are many persons with little in their possession who accept the renounced order of life like monkeys. They go here and there engaging in sense gratification and speaking intimately with women. Srt Caitanya Mahaprabhu said: My mind is not under My control. It does not like to see anyone in the renounced order who talks intimately with women."

Unless one speaks in this way while instructing and while concluding a subject, there is no benefit for oneself or others. Therefore when the previous *acaryas* have personally set example and taught others, how will we be benefitted by acting contrary to their instruction? And if one discusses in this way the improper behavior current in a religious sect or amongst the general public, then such talk is not adverse to devotional service. Even if one sometimes talks about a particular person, there is no fault. In the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (4.14.29) Maitreya Muni, the foremost devotee, spoke about Vena Maharaja in this way:

ittham viparyaya-matih   paplyan utpatham gatah

anunlyamanas tad-yacnam   na cakre bhrasta-mangalah

"The great sage Maitreya continued: Thus the King, who became unintelligent due to his sinful life and deviation from the right path, became actually bereft of all good fortune. He could not accept the requests of the great sages, which the sages put before him with great respect, and therefore he was condemned." Sri Maitreya Rsi needed to speak about others in this way; he spoke to his audience to instruct them. This is not *prajalpa*. The practicing devotee normally discusses ancient history in the association of devotees. Occasionally they talk about

nondevotees. Such talk is always auspicious and favorable to devotional service. But those who talk about others while influenced by devotional impediments like envy, hatred, pride, or distinction are offenders at the feet of Bhaktidevi.

Debate arises only from a desire for conquest. It is extremely abominable. Faultfinding arises only from imposing one's own bad habits on others. This should be given up in all respects. Speaking falsehoods is another form of useless talk. Worldly talk is completely rejected by renounced devotees. Householders may accept some worldly talk that is favorable to devotional service. If topics like archeology, zoology, astrology, and geography are devoid of God consciousness, they should be rejected. In the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (12.12.49-50) Sri Sukadeva Gosvami has said:

mrsa giras ta hy asatir asat-katha na kathyate yad bhagavan adhoksajah

tad eva satyam tad u haiva mangalam tad eva punyam bhagavad-gunodayam

tad eva ramyam ruciram navam navam tad eva sasvan manaso mahotsavam

tad eva sokarnava-sosanam n-nam yad uttamah sloka-yaso 'nuglyate

“Words that do not describe the transcendental Personality of Godhead but instead deal with temporary matters are simply false and useless. Only those words that manifest the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Lord are actually truthful, auspicious, and pious. Those words describing the glories of the allfamous Personality of Godhead are attractive, relishable, and ever fresh. Indeed, such words are a perpetual festival for the mind, and they dry up the ocean of misery.”

Speech in the form of blaspheming sadhus is the source of great inauspiciousness. If one wants to attain devotion to Lord Hari, then he should make a vow like this: “In this life I will never blaspheme sadhus.” Devotees are sadhus. By blaspheming them, all one's virtues are destroyed. By blaspheming the supremely pure Lord Mahadeva, Prajapati Daksa, the best of ascetics, met with severe inauspiciousness. As stated in *Srimad Bhagavatam* (10.4.46):

ayuh sriyam yaso dharmam lokan asisa eva ca hanti sreyamsi sarvani pumso mahad-atikramah

“My dear King, when a man persecutes great souls, all his benedictions of

longevity, beauty, fame, religion, blessings, and promotion to higher planets will be destroyed.”

The conclusion of this essay is this: Whatever *prajalpa* is not favorable for devotional service should be carefully given up by Vaisnavas who are cultivating *bhakti.* Amongst these instructions, the instruction to tolerate the urge to speak mentioned in the first verse—*vaco vegam*—is only a conditional urge. By giving up *prajalpa,* the urge to speak is permanently regulated. In order to pass one's life without sin, one should not speak anything more than whatever little is necessary. One need discuss only whatever is auspicious for oneself and others. If one wants to discuss topics of others, it will simply be useless speech. Therefore in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.28.2) Lord Krsna instructed Uddhava as follows:

para-svabhava-karmani yah prasamsati nindati sa asu bhrasyate svarthad asaty abhinivesatah

“Whoever indulges in praising or criticizing the qualities and behavior of others will quickly become deviated from his own best interest by his entanglement in illusory dualities.”

Niyamagraha Too much attachment to, or too much neglect of, rules and regulations

Niyamas, or rules, are of two kinds—*vidhis,* or prescriptions, and *nisedhas,* or prohibitions. Whatever is enjoined as one's duty is a prescription. Whatever is enjoined as restricted is a prohibition. Both kinds of rules are auspicious for the living entities.

Conditioned souls are eligible to attain a very exalted position from a very low position. Between these two positions there are many other positions. Each position is a gradual step. Each gradual step is a distinct level of advancement. Each and every gradual step has different prescriptions and prohibitions. Whenever a living entity steps to one level and stays there, he is obliged to follow the prescriptions and prohibitions of that step. By following those enjoined prescriptions and prohibitions, one becomes eligible to attain the next step. If one is unable to attain the next step, he falls down to a lower step. This is called degradation. Attaining the higher step is called advancement.

To properly follow the precepts of one's own level is called "one's prescribed duties" or steadiness in one's own position. Steadiness in one's own position is piety, and deviation from one's position is impiety. There is no other piety and impiety than this. Therefore Lord Krsna spoke the following instructions to Uddhava in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.21.2, 7):

sve sve 'dhikare ya nistha sa gunah pariklrtitah viparyayas tu dosah syad ubhayor esa niscayah

desa-kaladi-bhavanam vastunam mama sattama guna-dosau vidhlyete niyamartham hi karmanam

"Steadiness in one's own position is declared to be actual piety, whereas deviation from one's position is considered impiety. In this way the two are definitely ascertained. O saintly Uddhava, in order to restrict materialistic activities, I have established that which is proper and improper among all material things, including time, space, and all physical objects."

Prescriptions and prohibitions are further divided into two categories—conditional and constitutional. The living entity is pure spirit. The

prescriptions and prohibitions in the living entity's constitutional position are constitutional rules. But when the living entity is separated from his transcendental position, he accepts the designations given by the illusory energy and is entangled in this world—these are false designations. These designations are of many varieties, but the constitutional situation is one without second.

In the eternal state of the living entity, *prema* is the only prescription and envy is the only prohibition. This prescription and prohibition is subordinate to the living entity's eternal nature. The living entity imbued with *prema* and devoid of envy is the shelter of eternal *rasa.* Although *rasa* is of five varieties, still they are one undivided spiritual truth. The rules of that position are not to be discussed here. We must know only that this state is the eternal condition of the living entity. Although in the conditional state the rules are of different types, still all the steps are divided into three principle categories. According to the *Vedas, Bhagavad-gita,* and all the *smrtis,* three principle divisions are found—karma, *jnana,* and *bhakti.* In each division certain prescriptions and certain prohibitions are enjoined. In the karma division, the rules of *varnasrama* and the ten supplementary *samskaras* as well as regulative prayers are prescribed. Sins and bad habits are prohibited. In the *jnana* division, *sannyasa,* renunciation, detachment, and discussing matter and spirit are prescribed. Fruitive activities, forbidden activities, and attachment to sense enjoyment are prohibited. In the *bhakti* division, indifference, performance of activities favorable to devotion, following the prescriptions and prohibitions of the *jnana* division, and cultivating devotional service with the help of those prescriptions and prohibitions are prescribed. All activities opposed to the Lord, *jnana*, renunciation, attachment to sense enjoyment, conclusions opposed to devotional service, and giving up action are prohibited.

When the conditioned soul advances by giving up his illicit activities, or low-class character, then he attains the level of *karma-kanda.* Such a person should remain in *varnasrama-dharma* and aspire to attain the level of *jnana.* This is his duty. He should remain in *varnasrama* until he attains detachment from material activities by discussing the difference between matter and spirit and analyzing the nature of false ego, otherwise he becomes sinful. When that detachment is attained, then his higher qualification destroys his attachment to fruitive activities. But if that person still remains inclined to the rules of *karma-kanda*, then he cannot make advancement.

The duty of one who has attained the level of *jnana-kanda* is to remain fixed in

knowledge. Until he attains a taste for devotional service, he should remain under the rules of *jnana-kanda.* As soon as the qualification for devotional service manifests, he should give up his attachment for *jnana-kanda,* otherwise he is guilty of *niyamagraha* and will not make advancement. As stated in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.20.9):

tavat karmani kurvlta na nirvidyeta yavata mat-katha-sravanadau va sraddha yavan na jayate

“As long as one is not satiated by fruitive activity and has not awakened his taste for devotional service by *sravanam kTrtanam visnoh,* one has to act according to the regulative principles of the Vedic injunctions.” *Sraddha,* or faith, is the only qualification for *bhakti.* As stated in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.20.31):

tasman mad-bhakti-yuktasya yogino vai mad-atmanah na jnanam na ca vairagyam prayah sreyo bhaved iha

“Therefore, for a devotee engaged in My loving service, with mind fixed on Me, the cultivation of knowledge and renunciation is generally not the means of achieving the highest perfection within this world.”

The temple of *krsna-prema* is situated on the highest peak of Goloka Vrndavana. In order to reach that peak one has to cross the fourteen planetary systems of *karma-kanda,* the Viraja-Brahmaloka of the *jnana-kanda*, and then rise above Vaikuntha. By gradually giving up attachment to the stages of karma and *jnana,* one becomes eligible for *bhakti*. After crossing the various stages of *bhakti*, one reaches the temple door of *prema*.

Sraddha is the only rule for people established on the level of *bhakti*. As *anarthas,* or unwanted habits, are destroyed by the power of devotional service performed under the shelter of sadhu and guru, that *sraddha* transforms into devotional service with *nistha,* or firm faith. As the *anarthas* are further destroyed, one progresses from the level of *nistha* to *ruci,* or taste; from *ruci* to *asakti,* or attachment; and from *asakti* to *bhava*, or emotion. When *bhava,* in the form of *rati,* or affection, is mixed with the appropriate ingredients, it becomes *rasa.* In the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.14.26) it is said:

yatha yathatma parimrjyate 'sau mat-punya-gatha-sravanabhidhanaih tatha tatha pasyati vastu suksmam caksur yathaivanjana-samprayuktam

"When a diseased eye is treated with medicinal ointment it gradually recovers its power to see. Similarly, as a conscious living entity cleanses himself of material contamination by hearing and chanting the pious narrations of My glories, he regains his ability to see Me, the Absolute Truth, in My subtle spiritual form."

Srila Rupa Gosvami clarifies the sequence in his *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* as follows:

adau sraddha tatah sadhu- sango 'tha bhajana-kriya tato 'nartha-nivrttih syat
tato nistha rucis tatah athasaktis tato bhavas tatah
premabhyudancati sadhakanam ayam premnah pradurbhave bhavet kramah

"In the beginning one must have a preliminary desire for self-realization. This will bring one to the stage of trying to associate with persons who are spiritually elevated. In the next stage one becomes initiated by an elevated spiritual master, and under his instruction the neophyte devotee begins the process of devotional service. By execution of devotional service under the guidance of the spiritual master, one becomes free from all material attachment, attains steadiness in selfrealization, and acquires a taste for hearing about the Absolute Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna. This taste leads one further forward to attachment for Krsna consciousness, which is matured in *bhava,* or the preliminary stage of transcendental love of God. Real love for God is called *prema,* the highest perfectional stage of life."

In the process of *sadhana-bhakti* there are four stages—*sraddha, nistha, ruci,* and *asakti.* After passing these four stages one comes to the level of *bhava,* which is the doorstep of *prema.* According to the degree of faith, each level has different rules. As one leaves behind one level and progresses to the next, he should honor the rules of the latter and leave aside those of the former. Those who do not give up the rules of the previous level are bound by those rules like chains that do not allow him to proceed to the next level.

In the process of devotional service, whatever rules are prescribed for each level are all subordinate to one principle rule. That general rule is given in the *Padma Purana* as follows:

smartavyah satatam visnur vismartavyo na jatucit sarve vidhi-nisedhah syur etayor eva kinkarah

Remembering Krsna is the eternal duty. All other prescriptions mentioned in the *sastras* have arisen from this main prescription. Forgetting Krsna is never allowed. All other prohibitions mentioned in the *sastras* have arisen from this main prohibition. Keeping this main prescription in mind while advancing, the practitioner should give up his attachment for the prescriptions of the previous level and accept the prescriptions of the next level. Otherwise he will be guilty of *niyamagraha* and weak in reaching the next level. The practitioner of devotional service must always remember this point. In the conclusion of *Hari-bhakti-vilasa* a special instruction is given in this regard:

krtyanyetani tu prayo grhinam dhaninam satam likhitani na tu tyakta- parigraha mahatmanam

"Whatever activities are written in *Hari-bhakti-vilasa* are mostly all meant for householders and rich devotees. There are no rules written for the renunciates." Also in the conclusion of the *Hari-bhakti-vilasa* it is stated:

avasyam tani sarvani tesam tad rktva siddhaye prag apeksyani bhaktir hi sadacaraika sadhana

"Although the rules for renunciates are avoided in this book, still renunciates should follow those rules in order to perfect their position." The behavior exhibited by the renunciate sadhus is proper behavior in this connection. That alone is to be followed.

The first symptom of one who has attained *sraddha* is surrender to the feet of Lord Krsna. That surrender is of two types—for the householders and for the renunciates. *Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa* mentions only those rules that are meant for householders. That is why observances such as Siva-caturdasI are given therein. The surrendered renunciate should follow whichever observances are appropriate for renunciates. Both the householder and the renunciate become unalloyed surrender souls while advancing on the path of *sadhana*. Then their rules are only slightly different. At that stage they attain ultimate surrender due to advancement in *sadhana.* It is said in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.18.28), the *Hari-bhakti-vilasa* (20th *vilasa),* and the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.20.36):

jnana-nistho virakto va   mad-bhakto vanapeksakah

sa-lingan asramams tyaktva cared avidhi-gocarah

“A learned transcendentalist dedicated to the cultivation of knowledge and thus detached from external objects, or My devotee who is detached even from desire for liberation—both neglect those duties based on external rituals or paraphernalia. Thus their conduct is beyond the range of rules and regulations.

ekantitam gatanantu srl-krsna-caranabjayoh

bhaktih svatah pravartteta tad vighnaih kim vratadibhih

“When one becomes a pure devotee of the Lord, then devotion is spontaneously established in his heart. What then is the need to observe rituals that simply obstruct one's devotional service?

na mayy ekanta-bhaktanam guna-dosodbhava gunah sadhunam sama-cittanam buddheh param upeyusam

“Material piety and sin, which arise from the good and evil of this world, cannot exist with My unalloyed devotees, who, being free from material hankering, maintain steady spiritual consciousness in all circumstances. Indeed, such devotees have achieved Me, the Supreme Lord, who am beyond anything that can be conceived by material intelligence.”

In the *Hari-bhakti-vilasa* it is stated:

evam ekantinam prayah klrtanam smaranam prabhoh kurvatam parama-prltya krtyam anyan na rocyate

vihitesv eva nityesu pravartante svayam hi te ityady ekantinam bhati mahatmyam likhitam hi tat

The devotees whose minds are fixed on chanting and remembering Krsna's glories in pure love have no taste for activities prescribed for lower stages. Although they are not attached or bound to follow the prescribed rules of the scriptures, they sometimes follow out of their own accord. This is nicely explained in the eighth verse of the *Upadesamrta.* These are the glories of the pure devotees; that is, their glories are not diminished by neglecting other's prescribed rules.

The purport is that exalted devotees follow whatever rules of the lower stages they like. The *jnanis* follow the *varnasrama-dharma* of the karmis by their own

will, not by rule or obligation. Similarly the devotees, out of their sweet will, also follow the rules of the karmis and *jnanis* for some purpose. This means that although they are not obliged to follow the prescriptions and prohibitions, they do so on their own accord. The topmost pure devotees are also not considered overly attached to regulations when they follow the rules of karma, *jnana,* and ordinary *sadhana-bhakti*. Independently they are engaged in the unalloyed devotional service of Lord Krsna. The practicing devotee who gives up *niyamagraha* but spontaneously follows the rules achieves auspicious results.

The conclusion is that the practitioner attains a higher level as a result of following the rules prescribed according to his qualification. He should not maintain attachment for the rules of his previous level. Keeping this instruction always in mind, he should always engage in chanting and remembering Lord Krsna and thus continue advancing to higher levels.

Jana-sanga Association with worldly-minded persons

The word *jana* refers to both male and female human beings. Srila Rupa GosvamI has written in the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu: sadho sangah svato vare* —"a devotee should associate with devotees who are more advanced." Practicing devotees are generally superior to karmis and *jnanis* in all respects. In the *Bhagavad-gita* (7.28) it is said:

yesam tv anta-gatam papam   jananam punya-karmanam

te dvandva-moha-nirmukta   bhajante mam drdha-vratah

"Persons who have acted piously in previous lives and in this life and whose sinful actions are completely eradicated are freed from the dualities of delusion, and they engage themselves in My service with determination." Therefore devotees are naturally pure. There is no possibility for them to commit sin. They are not less intelligent like the karmis and *jnanis,* because they have taken shelter at the lotus feet of the omniscient Supreme Lord. Faith in the devotional service of Lord Krsna is achieved as a result of many lifetimes of pious activities. So there is no doubt that the devotees' activities are pure. From faith, the desire to associate with devotees naturally arises. By associating with devotees, everything is achieved. The glories of *sadhu-sanga* are mentioned in the *Adi Purana* as follows:

ye me bhakta-janah partha na me bhaktas ca te janah mad-bhaktanam ca ye bhaktas te me bhakta-tama matah

“O Partha, those who claim to be My devotees are actually not My devotees, but those who are the devotees of My devotees are actually My devotees.”

Regarding the need to associate with devotees, it is said:

darsana sparsanalapa sahavasadibhih ksanat bhaktah punanti krsnasya saksad api ca pukkasam

“Even an outcaste becomes completely pure by seeing, touching, conversing with, or living with Krsna's devotee for even a moment.” The *Srimad Bhagavatam* (7.5.32) states:

naisam matis tavad urukramanghrim sprsaty anarthapagamo yad-arthah

mahlyasam pada-rajo-'bhisekam niskincananam na vrnlta yavat

“Unless they smear upon their bodies the dust of the lotus feet of a Vaisnava completely freed from material contamination, persons very much inclined toward materialistic life cannot be attached to the lotus feet of the Lord, who is glorified for His uncommon activities. Only by becoming Krsna conscious and taking shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord in this way can one be freed from material contamination.”

The scriptures often state that without associating with the Lord's devotees, Bhaktidevi does not manifest in one's heart. It is most necessary for *sadhakas* to associate with devotees. Therefore, in this context, the word *jana-sanga* is understood to mean persons who are devoid of devotion. That is why Srila Rupa Prabhu has included the instruction to give up worldly association as one of the limbs of devotional service. In the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (1.2.43) it is stated: *sanga tyago vidurena bhagavad vimukhair janaih*—“One who desires to attain devotion to Krsna should carefully give up the association of worldly people.” That means the devotees should not engage in the activities mentioned in the fourth verse of the *Upadesamrta* with worldly people. Activities like talking with worldly people in the course of one's work are not considered association. But when the same activities are done with affection for someone, then one is considered to be associating with that person.

Every practicing devotee should know the various kinds of worldly people. Therefore we are hereby most unwillingly enumerating these people.
These worldly people are of seven kinds: (1) Mayavadis and atheists, (2) sense enjoyers, (3) those who fond of the sense enjoyers, (4) women, (5) womanizers, (6) the hypocritically devout, and (7) the ill-behaved foolish outcastes.

The Mayavadis do not accept the eternal name, form, qualities, and pastimes of the Supreme Lord. They consider the living entity as a product of *maya;* therefore in their opinion the living entity has no eternal existence. They do not consider devotional service eternal; rather, they consider it a temporary method to cultivate knowledge. All the Mayavadi conclusions are opposed to the principles of devotional service. Therefore by associating with Mayavadis, one's devotion gradually disappears. Sri Svarupa Damodara gave the following instruction in *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 2.94-95):

buddhi bhrasta haila tomara gopalera sange

mayavada sunibare upajila range

vaisnava hana yeba sarlraka-bhasya sune

sevya-sevaka-bhava chadi' apanare Isvara' mane

“You have lost your intelligence in the association of Gopala, and therefore you are eager to hear the Mayavada philosophy. When a Vaisnava listens to the *Sarlraka-bhasya,* the Mayavada commentary upon the *Vedanta-sutras,* he gives up the Krsna conscious attitude that the Lord is the master and the living entity is His servant. Instead, he considers himself the Supreme Lord.”

Those who do not accept the Supreme Lord, who is glorified by the *Vedas,* are called *nastikas,* or atheists. Their minds have been polluted by false arguments; therefore one's devotion is lost in their association.

Association with sense enjoyers is harmful. Those who are always busy associating with sense enjoyment are filled with blasphemy, envy, and violence. Quarrel, argument, and hankering for sense enjoyment is their life. The more they enjoy, the more their thirst for sense enjoyment increases. The sense enjoyers do not get time to speak or hear topics of Krsna. Whether they engage in pious activities or sinful activities, the sense enjoyers always remain far from knowledge of the self. Therefore in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 6.278) Srila

Raghunatha dasa Gosvami has said:

visaylra anna khaile malina haya mana malina mana haile nahe krsnera smarana

“When one eats food offered by a materialistic man, one's mind becomes contaminated, and when the mind is contaminated, one is unable to think of Krsna properly.” Those persons who externally engage in sensual activities and accept sense objects just to maintain body and soul together but internally engage in their constitutional position as servants of Krsna are not counted amongst the sense enjoyers, who are attached the fruits of their activities.

The sense enjoyers and persons fond of sense enjoyers are both worldly-minded. Persons who are fond of sense enjoyers are themselves also sense enjoyers, because they always think of sense enjoyment within their hearts. There are some people who are not themselves sense enjoyers, but they take pleasure in associating with sense enjoyers. Their association should also be renounced, because they will soon become sense enjoyers and bad association themselves. There are two types of sense enjoyers—those who are extremely attached to sense enjoyment and devotees who are attached to sense enjoyment. Associating with those who are extremely attached should be totally rejected. The devotees who are attached to sense enjoyment are also of two types—those who have included the Lord as a part of their sense enjoyment and those who have kept the Lord in the center of their sense enjoyment. Association with the latter type is preferable to association with the former. Although those who engage in sense enjoyment according to religious codes are better than the sinful sense enjoyers, still the practicing devotee should not associate with them until they become devotees. Simply by wearing the dress of a renunciate one does not become a devotee free from sense gratification, because renunciates often collect and save objects of sense enjoyment. On the other hand, many persons resemble sense enjoyers but utilize everything in the worship of Lord Hari in the mood of detachment. Considering all this, the practicing devotee should give up the association of sense enjoyers and those fond of them and engage in devotional service in a secluded place or, if he is fortunate, in the association of genuine devotees.

Do not associate with women. On the other hand, when a woman is engaged in *sadhana-bhakti*, she should not associate with men. Associating with the opposite sex is very inauspicious for the advancing devotee. There are two types

of men and women. When a man and woman are married according to religious principles, there is no sin in their touching and talking with each other; rather, this touching and talking is beneficial because of the scriptural sanction. There is, however, no provision for illusory activities other than the execution of reciprocal duties. If they are illusioned by each other and they engage in activities other than prescribed duties, then that is called *strl-sanga* and *purusa-sanga*, or association with the opposite sex. For those who are engaged in worshiping Krsna, such association yields inauspicious results. If either one is guilty of such association, then they become an obstacle for the other party. If the wife is helpful in the discharge of devotional service, then the fault of *strl-sanga* does not arise. But if the wife is an impediment in the discharge of devotional service, then one should carefully give up her association. We should consider the behavior of the great Vaisnava *acarya*, Srimad Ramanujacarya2, in this connection. When there is no marital relationship and one converses with a woman with evil intentions, then this is *strl-sanga*. That is sinful and detrimental to devotional service. Considering these points, the practicing devotee should very carefully give up the association of women and persons fond of women. As stated in *Srimad Bhagavatam* (3.31.35):

na tathasya bhaven moho bandhas canya-prasangatah yosit-sangad yatha pumso yatha tat-sangi-sangatah

"The infatuation and bondage which accrue to a man from attachment to any other object is not as complete as that resulting from attachment to a woman or to the fellowship of men who are fond of women." For a householder devotee, touching and speaking to his wife in the above mentioned manner is not detrimental to devotional service; but for a renunciate there cannot be any type of talking or touching a woman, otherwise his practice of devotional service will be completely spoiled. Association with such a deviated person should be totally rejected.

One should give up the association of *dharmadvajls,* the hypocritically devout, with special care. Those who accept the external signs of *dharma* but do not actually follow *dharma* are called *dharmadvajls.* There are two types of *dharmadvajls*—the hypocrites and the fools, or the cheaters and the cheated. Such hypocrisy in *jnana-kanda* and *karma-kanda* is also condemned. In devotional service this hypocrisy ruins everything. Better associate with sense enjoyers, for in this whole world there is no worse association than the *dharmadvajl.* The deceitful *dharmadvajls* accept the signs of *dharma* with a

desire to cheat the world, and to fulfill their crooked desires they cheat the foolish by helping them in their rascaldom. Some of them become gurus and others become disciples, and by trickery they accumulate wealth, women, false-prestige, and material assets. If one gives up the association of crooked hypocrites, then he can honestly engage in devotional service. Honest worship is the only way to attain Krsna's mercy. As stated in *Srimad Bhagavatam* (1.3.38):

sa veda dhatuh padavlm parasya duranta-vlryasya rathanga-paneh

yo 'mayaya santatayanuvrttya bhajeta tat-pada-saroja-gandham

“Only those who render unreserved [without hypocrisy*], uninterrupted, favorable service unto the lotus feet of Lord Krsna, who carries the wheel of the chariot in His hand, can know the creator of the universe in His full glory, power, and transcendence.” Again in *Srimad Bhagavatam* (2.7.42) Lord Brahma tells Narada:

yesam sa esa bhagavan dayayed anantah sarvatmanasrita-pado yadi nirvyallkam

te dustaram atitaranti ca deva-mayam naisam mamaham iti dhlh sva-srgala-bhaksye

“But anyone who is specifically favored by the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, due to unalloyed [without hypocrisy*] surrender unto the service of the Lord, can overcome the insurmountable ocean of illusion and can understand the Lord. But those who are attached to this body, which is meant to be eaten at the end by dogs and jackals, cannot do so.”

Externally exhibiting the symptoms of a Vaisnava while internally remaining a Mayavadi is actually pseudo-Vaisnavism, or hypocrisy. In *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 13.93, 109-110) there is a description of Ramadasa Visvasa, who was externally a great Vaisnava, devoted to Lord Ramacandra:

asta-prahara rama-namajapena ratri-dine sarva tyaji' calila jagannatha-darasane

ramadasa yadi prathama prabhure milila mahaprabhu adhika tanre krpa na karila

antare mumuksu tenho, vidya-garvavan sarva-citta-jnata prabhu—sarvajna bhagavan

“Ramadasa had renounced everything and was going to see Lord Jagannatha.

While traveling, he chanted the holy name of Lord Rama twenty-four hours a day. When Ramadasa Visvasa met Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the Lord did not show him any special mercy, although this was their first meeting. Within his heart, Ramadasa Visvasa was an impersonalist who desired to merge into the existence of the Lord, and he was very proud of his learning. Being the omniscient Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu can understand the heart of everyone, and thus He knew all these things.”

Srila Narottama dasa Thakura, in his great humility, has stated:

kama, krodha chaya jane,   lana phire nana sthane,

visaya bhunjaya nana mate.

haiya mayara dasa, kari nana abhilasa, tomara smarana gela dure

artha-labha—ei ase,   kapata-vaisnava-vese,

bhramiya bulaye ghare ghare.

“The six enemies, beginning with lust and anger, are taking me here and there to enjoy various forms of sense gratification. Being a servant of Maya, I have unlimited desires and have therefore forgotten You. Hoping to gain wealth, I wander from house to house in the dress of a pseudo-Vaisnava.”

Unless one gives up the association of this type of *dharmadvajl,* one cannot purely engage in devotional service. Most of the people in the world are of this type. Therefore until one gets the opportunity to associate with a pure devotee, he should pass his life engaged in devotional service in a solitary place.

The worship of Krsna is not enhanced by associating with ill-behaved, foolish outcastes. They are naturally attached to eating meat and drinking wine, and they are not situated in *varnasrama-dharma*. Their character is always unregulated. By associating with ill-behaved persons, the mind becomes polluted. But if those persons become faithful in devotional service by

associating with a Vaisnava and they gradually get a taste for worshiping Krsna with a pure heart, then their association is auspicious. Even if they commit abominable actions for some time due to their former nature, still they are sadhus. In *Bhagavad-gita* (9.30-31) it is said:

api cet su-duracaro bhajate mam ananya-bhak sadhur eva sa mantavyah samyag vyavasito hi sab ksipram bhavati dharmatma sasvac-chantim nigacchati kaunteya pratijanihi na me bhaktah pranasyati

“Even if one commits the most abominable action, if he is engaged in devotional service he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated in his determination. He quickly becomes righteous and attains lasting peace. O son of KuntI, declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes.”

The purport is this: If the outcastes attain faith in unalloyed devotional service by some good fortune, then it can be said that they have attained the genuine path. There is no doubt that in a short time they too will become pure and peaceful by following the footsteps of Haridasa Thakura. Ill-behavior, due to one's nature, necessarily remains for some time. Even then, such association cannot be called bad. In the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.20.27-29) the symptoms of such persons are described as follows:

jata-sraddho mat-kathasu nirvinnah sarva-karmasu veda duhkhatmakan kaman parityage 'py anlsvarah

tato bhajeta mam prltah sraddhalur drdha-niscayah

jusamanas ca tan kaman duhkhodarkams ca garhayan

proktena bhakti-yogena bhajato masakrn muneh

kama hrdayya nasyanti sarve mayi hrdi sthite

“Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories, being disgusted with all material activities, knowing that all sense gratification leads to misery, but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment, My devotee remains happy and worships Me with great faith and conviction. Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment, My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result, and he sincerely repents such activities. When an intelligent person engages constantly in worshiping Me through loving

devotional service as described by Me, his heart becomes firmly situated in Me. Thus all material desires within the heart are destroyed."

The conclusion is that the association of pious and sinful persons who are bereft of Krsna consciousness is undesirable. On the other hand, the association of persons who are sinful, yet devoted to the Lord, is desirable. The *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (1.2.51) quotes the following verse spoken by Maharsi Katyayana in the *Katyayana-samhita:*

varam huta-vaha-jvala-   panjarantar-vyavasthitih

na sauri-cinta-vimukha-   jana-samvasa-vaisasam

"It is better to accept the miseries of being encaged within bars and surrounded by burning flames than to associate with those bereft of Krsna consciousness. Such association is a very great hardship."

While practicing devotional service one should carefully understand this subject and act accordingly.

Laulya Ardent longing or greed

The meaning of the word *laulya* is restlessness, greed, and desire. Restlessness is of two kinds—restlessness of the mind and restlessness of the intelligence. The *citta*, or mind, has the propensity for following the dictates of the senses. When the mind follows the dictates of the senses and becomes absorbed in a particular subject, attachment or aversion arise. Therefore restlessness of the mind is of two types—restlessness due to attachment and restlessness due to aversion. In *Bhagavad-gita* (2.67) it is said:

indriyanam hi caratam yan mano 'nuvidhiyate tad a2ya harati &rajnam vayur navam ivam@ha2i

"As a boat on the water is swept away by a strong wind, even one of the roaming senses on which the mind focuses can carry away a man's intelligence." Again in the *Bhagavad-gita* (3.34) it is said:

indriya2yendriya2yarthe raga-dvesau vyava2thitau

tayor na vasam agacchet tau hy a2ya &ari&anthinau

"There are principles to regulate attachment and aversion pertaining to the senses and their objects. One should not come under the control of such attachment and aversion, because they are stumbling blocks on the path of self-realization." In order to regulate *laulya,* in the form of restlessness of the mind, one has to take shelter of goddess Bhaktidevl. The instruction of BhaktidevI is this: When the cause of the mind's restlessness is sense gratification and this restlessness is the main obstacle in the practice of devotional service, then all sensual activities should be dovetailed in the service of the Lord and the attachment to sense gratification should be transformed into attachment for the Lord. Then the mind becomes fixed in devotional service by taking shelter of that attachment. The eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, and the sense of touch are called knowledge acquiring senses. The hands, the legs, the anus, and so on are the working senses. When the objects of all these senses are associated with in a devotional mood, then the mind becomes fixed on the Lord. Taste, form, smell, touch, and sound—these are the objects of the senses. One has to arouse a mood of devotion in all these objects, and enjoy them, then devotional service is cultivated. Among the objects of the senses, aversion should be applied on any

that are unfavorable for devotional service and attachment should be applied on any that are favorable for devotional service. But until the restlessness of the intelligence is vanquished, how will the restlessness of the mind be checked? When the restlessness of the intelligence is vanquished, the mind can regulate attachment and aversion for sense objects by the strength of the intelligence.

The intelligence is that which discriminates between the mind's good and bad propensities. That intelligence is of two types—resolute and many-branched.

There is one type of resolute intelligence, and there are unlimited types of many-branched intelligence. As stated in *Bhagavad-gita* (2.41):

vyavaayatmika suddhir ekeha kuru-nandana sahu-sakha hy anantas ca suddhayo 'vyava2ayinam

“Those who are on the spiritual path are resolute in purpose, and their aim is one. O beloved child of the Kurus, the intelligence of those who are irresolute is many-branched.” Disturbances such as lust, desire to attain the heavenly planets, increasing activities that produce enjoyment and opulence, and rejection of the spiritual world all arise from the many-branched intelligence of irresolute persons. Therefore in the *Bhagavad-gita* (2.44) it is stated:

bhogaisvarya-prasaktanam tayapahrta-cetasam vyavasayatmika buddhih samadhau na vidhlyate

“In the minds of those who are too attached to sense enjoyment and material opulence, and who are bewildered by such things, the resolute determination for devotional service to the Supreme Lord does not take place.” Those whose intelligence is fixed in *samadhi* are transcendentally situated and have steady minds. Their symptoms are given in the *Bhagavad-gita* (2.55-56) as follows:

prajahati yada kaman sarvan partha mano-gatan atmany evatmana tustah sthita-prajnas tadocyate

duhkhesv anudvigna-manah sukhesu vigata-sprhah vlta-mga-bhaya-krodhah sthita-dhlr munir ucyate

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O Partha, when a man gives up all varieties of desire for sense gratification, which arise from mental concoction,

and when his mind, thus purified, finds satisfaction in the self alone, then he is said to be in pure transcendental consciousness. One who is not disturbed in mind even amidst the threefold miseries or elated when there is happiness, and who is free from attachment, fear, and anger, is called a sage of steady mind." These two verses from the *Gita* clarify the process of tolerating the urges of speech, mind, and anger as recommended in the first verse of *Sri Upadesamrta*.

Now it should be known that there are two types of intelligence. The propensity to discriminate between good and bad under the dictation of the mind is called mundane intelligence, and the intelligence to discriminate between good and bad under the dictation of the soul is called spiritual intelligence. That is why in the *Bhagavad-gita* (3.42) it is said:

indriyani parany ahur indriyebhyah param manah manasas tu para buddhir yo buddheh paratas tu sah

"The working senses are superior to dull matter; mind is higher than the senses, because the senses work under the dictation of the mind's propensities; intelligence is still higher than the mind, for intelligence is the propensity of the soul and therefore the master of the mind; and he [the soul] is even higher than the intelligence." The intelligence also pervertedly accepts materialism only when under the control of the false ego. When under the control of the pure ego, in the form of identifying oneself as the servant of Krsna, the intelligence is always naturally pure. Therefore the *Vedas* establish that the knower of the body is intelligent. That spirit soul is higher than the intelligence, because intelligence is only the soul's propensity.

When a living entity realizes himself as a pure spiritual particle, then his spiritual ego, in the form of identifying himself as the servant of Krsna, naturally arises. At that time the intelligence in its pure form rejects materialism and accepts spiritualism. At that time a living entity has no desire other than the service of Krsna, and he rejects material desires as insignificant. In this position the living entity is known as *sthita-prajna*, transcendentally situated, or *sthita-dhi*, steady-minded. Being empowered by spiritual potency, the intelligence then becomes steady and controls the mind and heart by regulating them. Then the mind, under the direction of the intelligence, controls the senses by regulating them, and a favorable mood for devotional service manifests in the sense objects *(indriyasya arthe)*. This is called *indriya nigraha*, controlling the senses in devotional service. Whatever arrangements are there for controlling the senses in

the paths of dry knowledge and renunciation does not properly control the senses. In *Bhagavad-gTta* (2.59) it is said:

visaya vinivartante niraharasya dehinah rasa-varjam raso py asya param drstva nivartate

“The embodied soul may be restricted from sense enjoyment, though the taste for sense objects remains. But, ceasing such engagements by experiencing a higher taste, he is fixed in consciousness.” This is real sense control. One should spiritualize the senses and control them with the mind, and one should spiritualize the mind and control it with the intelligence. By this process, *laulya,* in the form of restlessness of the intelligence and mind, is vanquished. When the intelligence is restless, the mind cannot be fixed. The restless intelligence wanders—sometimes in karma, sometimes in yoga, sometimes in dry renunciation, and sometimes in dry knowledge. To fix the intelligence in *bhakti* by giving up restlessness, the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.20.32-34) prescribes:

yat karmabhir yat tapasa jnana-vairagyatas ca yat yogena dama-dharmena sreyobhir itarair api sarvam mad-bhakti-yogena mad-bhakto labhate 'njasa svargapavargam mad-dhama kathancid yadi vanchati na kincit sadhavo dhara bhakta hy ekantino mama vanchanty api maya dattam kaivalyam apunar-bhavam

“Everything that can be achieved by fruitive activities, penance, knowledge, detachment, mystic yoga, charity, religious duties, and all other means of perfecting life is easily achieved by My devotee through loving service unto Me. If somehow or other My devotee desires promotion to heaven, liberation, or residence in My abode, he easily achieves such benedictions. Because My devotees possess saintly behavior and deep intelligence, they completely dedicate themselves to Me and do not desire anything besides Me. Indeed, even if I offer them liberation from birth and death, they do not accept it. The devotees naturally enjoy the pleasure of My service.”

Considering all this, the practicing devotee should give up *laulya* in the form of restlessness and attain fixed intelligence in devotional service.

Another meaning of the word *laulya* is greed. If greed is directed to other objects, then how can it be applied in relation with Krsna? Greed should be carefully engaged in the service of Krsna. Greed for material enjoyment should

be conquered by the above-mentioned method. That is why it is said that persons who are overcome by lust and greed cannot become as pure through the process of yoga (beginning with *yama)* as they can by serving Krsna. As stated in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (1.6.36):

yamadibhir yoga-pathaih kama-lobha-hato muhuh mukunda-sevaya yadvat tathatmaddha na samyati

“It is true that by practicing restraint of the senses by the yoga system one can get relief from the disturbances of lust and greed, but this is not sufficient to give satisfaction to the soul, for this [satisfaction] is derived from devotional service to the Personality of Godhead;” because *samo man-nisthata buddheh* —“absorbing the intelligence in Me constitutes mental equilibrium.” *(Bhag.* 11.19.36) By developing greed for Krsna's service, the Vaisnava's service, and chanting the holy names, there will be no greed for inferior things. One who becomes greedy by seeing the Vrajavast's service to Krsna is very fortunate. By the mercy of that greed, he attains the qualification for *raga-bhakti.* One's material greed is vanquished in proportion to the development of greed for *ragatmika* service. If one has greed for nice foodstuffs, drinks, sleeping, smoking, and drinking wine, then one's devotion diminishes. Greed for wine, wealth, and women is most contrary to devotional principles. Those who have a desire for attaining pure devotional service should carefully give up such things. Whether for auspicious things or sinful things, greed for anything not related to Krsna is most despicable. Greed only in relation to Krsna is the cause of all auspiciousness. The greed attained by the *mahajanas* for topics of Krsna is mentioned in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (1.1.19) as follows:

vayam tu na vitrpyama uttama-sloka-vikrame yac-chrnvatam rasa-jnanam svadu svadu pade pade

“We never tire of hearing the transcendental pastimes of the Personality of Godhead, who is glorified by hymns and prayers. Those who have developed a taste for transcendental relationships with Him relish hearing of His pastimes at every moment.” Another name for greed in relation to Krsna is *adara*, or respect. We will discuss this in detail later.

Another meaning of *laulya* is desire. Desires are of two types—desire for material enjoyment and desire for liberation. Unless one gives up these two types of desires, one can not practice devotional service. Srila Rupa Gosvamt has

written in the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (1.2.15):

bhukti-mukti-sprha yavat pisacl hrdi vartate tavad bhakti-sukhasyatra katham abhyudayo bhavet

“The material desire to enjoy the material world and the desire to become liberated from material bondage are considered to be two witches, and they haunt one like ghosts. As long as these witches remain within the heart, how can one feel transcendental bliss? As long as these two witches remain in the heart, there is no possibility of enjoying the transcendental bliss of devotional service.”

There are two types of material enjoyments—worldly and heavenly. Wealth, women, children, opulences, kingdom, victory, good food, good sleep, associating with women for sense enjoyment, good birth, and other pleasures are all worldly enjoyments. Going to heaven and drinking nectar there, as well as sense gratification free of old age are all heavenly enjoyments. When the heart is filled with the desire to enjoy, one cannot selflessly worship Krsna. Therefore unless the desire for enjoyment is completely uprooted from the heart, one's progress in devotional service will be obstructed. In this regard, there is one thing to be said: If all these material enjoyments are favorable to devotional service, then householders can accept them without sin. In that case all these enjoyments are not called enjoyments, but rather they are means of progress in a devotee's life. *Srimad Bhagavatam* (1.2.9-10) has stated:

dharmasya hy apavargyasya   nartho 'rthayopakalpate

narthasya dharmaikantasya   kamo labhaya hi smrtah

kamasya nendriya-pritir   labho jiveta yavata

jivasya tattva-jijnasa nartho yas ceha karmabhih

“All occupational engagements are certainly meant for ultimate liberation. They should never be performed for material gain. Furthermore, according to sages, one who is engaged in the ultimate occupational service should never use material gain to cultivate sense gratification. Life's desires should never be directed toward sense gratification. One should desire only a healthy life, or self-preservation, since a human being is meant for inquiry about the Absolute Truth. Nothing else should be the goal of one's works.” Another name of *dharma,* or occupational service, is *yukta-vairagya.*

Desire for liberation must be rejected. There are five type of liberation; namely, *salokya*—living on the same planet; *sarsti*—having the same opulence; *samipya* — to be a personal associate; *sarupya*—having the same bodily features; and *sayujya*—oneness. *Sayujya*, liberation in the form of merging with the Lord, is hated by the practitioner of devotional service. Although *salokya, sarsti, samipya*, and *sarupya* are devoid of the desire for enjoyment, still they are undesirable. As soon as a living entity becomes free from material bondage by the strength of devotion, he immediately attains liberation. That liberation, however, is not the principle fruit of *bhakti*. The pure love for Krsna attained by liberated souls is the principle fruit of *sadhana-bhakti*. In this regard, Sri Sarvabhauma Bhattacarya makes the following appropriate statement in *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 6.267-269):

salokyadi' cari yadi haya seva-dvara tabu kadacit bhakta kare angikara

sayujya' smite bhaktera haya ghrna-bhaya naraka vanchaye, tabu sayujya na laya

brahme, isvare sayujya dui ta' prakara brahma-sayujya haite isvara-sayujya dhikkara

"If there is a chance to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a pure devotee sometimes accepts the *salokya, sarupya, samipya*, or *sarsti* forms of liberation, but never *sayujya*. A pure devotee does not like even to hear about *sayujya-mukti*, which inspires him with fear and hatred. Indeed, the pure devotee would rather go to hell than merge into the effulgence of the Lord. There are two kinds of *sayujya-mukti*—merging into the Brahman effulgence and merging into the personal body of the Lord. Merging into the Lord's body is even more abominable than merging into His effulgence."

The purport is that the liberation of a devotee, in the form of freedom from bondage, is easily attained by the will of Krsna. That is why one should not pollute his endeavor for devotional service with desires.

It is the essential duty of the practicing devotee to carefully give up materialistic *laulya*.

Six Qualities That Enhance Bhakti

Utsaha Enthusiasm

In his *Sri Upadesamrta*, Srila Rupa Gosvami has described *atyahara, prayasa, prajalpa, niyamagraha, jana-sanga,* and *laulya* as detrimental to devotional service. We have already separately described these six items. Now, in the third *sloka* he mentions the six items favorable for devotional service:

utsahan niscayad dhairyat tat-tat-karma-pravartanat sanga-tyagat sato vrtteh sadbhir bhaktih prasidhyati

“There are six principles favorable to the execution of pure devotional service: (1) *utsaha*, being enthusiastic; (2) *niscaya*, endeavoring with confidence; (3) *dhairya,* being patient; (4) *tat-tat-karma-pravartana,* acting according to regulative principles [such as *sravanam kirtanam visnoh smaranam*—hearing, chanting and remembering Krsna]; (5) *sanga-tyaga,* abandoning the association of nondevotees; and (6) *sato vrtteh*, or *sadhu-vrtti*, following in the footsteps of the previous *acaryas.* These six principles undoubtedly assure the complete success of pure devotional service.”

Now we should discuss these six items separately. Therefore first I am speaking about the conclusions regarding *utsaha*.

Without *utsaha,* one becomes negligent in his worship. Negligence is born out of inactivity, apathy, or indifference. Laziness and inertia are called inactivity. When *utsaha* is generated, laziness and inertia cannot remain. The absence of desire to work is inertia. This inertia is opposite to the nature of spirit. If one allows this inertia to remain in his body or heart, then how can he perform devotional service? The state of apathy develops from carelessness. One should practice devotional service without deviation. This is instructed in the *Bhagavad-gita* (6.23) in the following words:

tam vidyad duhkha-samyoga- viyogam yoga-samjnitam sa niscayena yoktavyo yogo 'nirvinna-cetasa

“This indeed is actual freedom from all miseries arising from material contact. One should engage oneself in the practice of yoga with determination and faith

and not be deviated from the path.” In his commentary on this verse, Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana Mahasaya has said: *atmanya yogyatva-mananam nirvedas tad rahitena cetasa*—“one becomes indifferent to whatever work he feels unqualified for.” Devotional service should be performed in this mentality. Regarding *bhakti-yoga*, it is said in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.20.7-8):

nirvinnanam jnana-yogo nyasinam iha karmasu tesv anirvinna-
cittanam karma-yogas tu kaminam

yadrcchaya mat-kathadau na nirvinno nati-sakto

jata-sraddhas tu yah puman bhakti-yogo 'sya siddhi-dah

“Among these three paths, *jnana-yoga*, the path of philosophical speculation, is recommended for those who are disgusted with material life and are thus detached from ordinary, fruitive activities. Those who are not disgusted with material life, having many desires yet to fulfill, should seek perfection through the path of karma-yoga. If somehow or other by good fortune one develops faith in hearing and chanting My glories, such a person, being neither very disgusted with nor attached to material life, should achieve perfection through the path of *bhakti-yoga.”* The purport is this: For those who have attained indifference for material activities but have not yet realized spiritual activities, what can remain in their hearts besides indifference? For them the undifferentiated *brahma-jnana* is the topmost achievement. For those who have not attained indifference for material activities due to lack of spiritual realization, there is no way to cleanse the heart other than karma-yoga. Those who have realized spiritual activities and understood that material activities are insignificant attain indifference for all material activities. They accept some material activities as a support for their spiritual awakening, but they have no attachment for such activities. In proportion to the degree that they discuss spiritual topics in devotion, freedom from material association is awakened as an extraneous fruit. The symptoms of a devotee are given in *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.20.27-8) as follows:

jata-sraddho mat-kathasu nirvinnah sarva-karmasu

veda duhkhatmakam kaman parityage 'py anlsvarah

tato bhajeta mam prltah sraddhalur drdha-niscayah

jusamanas ca tan kaman duhkhodarkams ca garhayan

“Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories, being disgusted with all material activities, knowing that all sense gratification leads to misery, but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment, My devotee should remain happy and worship Me with great faith and conviction. Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment, My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result, and he sincerely repents such activities.” Karma arises from lust, *jnana* arises from indifference, and *bhakti* arises from faith in the Supreme Lord. The person who has attained faith is naturally disgusted with material activities. He accepts without attachment only those activities that are favorable for increasing his faith in the Lord. Without the material body one cannot cultivate devotional service. So there is no benefit if one renounces the activities that are needed to maintain the physical body, thinking them to be the source of misery and lust. The fruits of those activities, which are the source of misery for others, are therefore enjoyed by the devotees, who condemn them as insignificant. They worship Krsna with devotion and firm faith while enjoying the fruits of their work as they fulfill the necessities of life. Those who enjoy the results of material activities with ardent affection are called attached. Those who neglect the results of karma, but accept only what is favorable to devotional service are called unattached. Although they are unattached to material activity, they work enthusiastically in devotional life. The process of advancement for the practitioner of devotional service is stated in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.20.29-30, 35) as follows:

proktena bhakti-yogena bhajato masakrn muneh kama hrdayya nasyanti sarve mayi hrdi sthite

bhidyate hrdaya-granthis ksiyante casya karmani

chidyante sarva-samsayah mayi drste 'khilatmani

nairapeksyam param prahur nihsreyasam analpakam tasman nirasiso bhaktir nirapeksasya me bhavet

“When an intelligent person engages constantly in worshiping Me through loving devotional service as described by Me, his heart becomes firmly situated in Me. Thus all material desires within the heart are destroyed. The knot in the heart is pierced, all misgivings are cut to pieces, and the chain of fruitive actions is terminated when I am seen as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is said that complete detachment is the highest stage of freedom. Therefore, one who

has no personal desire and does not pursue personal rewards can achieve loving devotional service unto Me." The purport is this: It is useless trying independently to destroy ignorance and lust in the heart. But ignorance, lust, fruitive activities, all doubts, and material bondage are destroyed by the mercy of the Lord in the course of cultivating devotional service. The endeavor of karmis and *jnanis* does not yield such results. Therefore when one becomes neutral by giving up other desires and hopes, he attains pure devotional service to Krsna.

We should not lose enthusiasm because we have no strength to destroy the reactions of karma. In the very beginning of devotional service the *sadhaka* must have faith with full enthusiasm. One pure Vaisnava *acarya* has written that the process of *bhajana-kriya*, devotional practice, is of two types—*nisthita*, fixed, and *anisthita*, flickering. With faith, one should learn devotional service under the merciful direction of a sadhu; and when he attains the stage of firm faith, he engages in *nisthita*, fixed, devotional service. Until he attains this fixed devotional service, his service remains flickering. In this stage of devotional service there are six symptoms: *utsaha-mayi*, false confidence; *ghana-tarala*, sporadic endeavor; *vyudha-vikalpa*, indecision; *visaya-sangara*, struggle with the senses; *niyamaksama*, inability to uphold vows; and *taranga-rangini*, enjoying the facilities offered by *bhakti*.

In *Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa* carelessness is counted among the offenses against the holy name. In that scripture the word *pramada* is described as inattentiveness. *Sri Hari-nama-cintamani* has further divided this inattentiveness in three ways — apathy, inactivity, and distraction. Until one gets free from these three types of inattentiveness, one cannot perform devotional service at all. Even if one gives up all other *namaparadhas,* if he remains inattentive, he can never have attraction for the holy names. If one has enthusiasm in the beginning of devotional service, and that enthusiasm does not become cold, then one will never become apathetic, lazy, or distracted in chanting the holy names. Therefore enthusiasm is the only support for all types of devotional service. By enthusiastically performing devotional service one can very quickly give up *anisthita* service and attain *nistha.* Therefore Srila Rupa Gosvami has said:

adau sraddha tatah sadhu- sango 'tha bhajana-kriya tato 'nartha-nivrttih syat tato nistha rucis tatah

By the awakening of faith, one becomes eligible for devotional service. When this eligiblity is attained, one achieves the association of devotees. By the

association of devotees, one is engaged in the execution of devotional service. In the beginning

there is no *nistha,* or firm faith, in that service because various types of *anarthas* keep crushing the heart. All *anarthas* are vanquished, however, by performing devotional service with enthusiasm. The more *anarthas* are vanquished, the more *nistha* is awakened.

The word *sraddha* certainly means faith, but enthusiasm is the life of *sraddha.* Faith without enthusiasm is meaningless. Many people think they have faith in God, but because they have no enthusiasm, their faith has no meaning. Therefore, due to lack of *sadhu-sanga,* they do not perform devotional service.

Niscaya Confidence

In his *Upadesamrta,* Srila Rupa Gosvami has instructed the practitioners of devotional service to be confident. Until this confidence is achieved, one will remain doubtful. Doubtful persons never have auspiciousness. For how will those who are doubtful at heart have faith in unalloyed devotional service? The *Bhagavad-gita* (4.40) says:

ajnas casraddadhanas ca samsayatma vinasyati nayam loko 'sti na paro na sukham samsayatmanah

“But ignorant and faithless persons who doubt the revealed scriptures do not attain God consciousness; they fall down. For the doubting soul there is happiness neither in this world nor in the next.” One who has faith is certainly without doubts, because the word faith means firm conviction. As long as doubts are there, firm conviction cannot remain in the heart. Therefore faithful living entities are always doubtless. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has ordered all Vaisnavas to first understand three truths—*sambandha, abhidheya,* and *prayojana.* There are ten principle subjects in these three truths. The first is that Vedic literatures are the only authority. In order to ascertain the truth, one must accept authority. There are nine realities, which can be known only through Vedic authority. Different scriptures have defined different authorities. Some say *pratyaksa,* or direct understanding, some say *anumana,* or hypothetical understanding, and some say *upamana,* or analogies, are authorities. And others include other subjects as authorities. All other authorities, however, are considered auxiliary authorities by the Vaisnava literatures propounded by

Sriman Mahaprabhu. Therefore the selfperfect authority received through the disciplic succession is the only principle authority to be accepted. All the natures that exist in this world are divided into two categories—some are inconceivable and some are conceivable. The material natures are conceivable because they automatically awaken in the course of thinking. Spiritual nature is inconceivable because it is not perceivable by people's poor fund of knowledge. Inconceivable natures cannot be known without selfrealization. Therefore there is no entrance into inconceivable subjects for authorities like *pratyaksa,* which are included in the category of argument. That is why *Sra Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (as quoted from the *Mahabharata, Udyoga-parva)* says:

acintyah khalu ye bhava na tams tarkena yojayet prakrtibhyah param yac ca tad acintyasya laksanam

“The state of *acintya* cannot be ascertained by argument. It is that which is beyond the twenty-four elements of material nature.” There is no entrance for *pratyaksa* and *anumana* in that state. In order to know the inconceivable nature, selfrealization is the only means. Self-realization is almost impossible for ordinary people. Seeing people's terrible madness, the most merciful Supreme Lord manifested the Vedic literatures. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 20.122, 124, 125) Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has said:

maya-mugdha jlvera nahi svatah krsna-jnana jlvere krpaya kaila krsna veda-purana

veda-sastra kahe—sambandha' abhidheya' prayojana'

'krsna'—prapya sambandha, bhakti'—praptyera sadhana

abhidheya-nama bhakti' prema'—prayojana purusartha-siromani prema maha-dhana

“The conditioned soul cannot revive his Krsna consciousness by his own effort. But out of causeless mercy, Lord Krsna compiled the Vedic literature and its supplements, the *Puranas.* The Vedic literatures give information about the living entity's eternal relationship with Krsna, which is called *sambandha.* The living entity's understanding of this relationship and acting accordingly is called *abhidheya.* Returning home, back to Godhead, is the ultimate goal of life and is called *prayojana.* Devotional service, or sense activity for the satisfaction of the Lord, is called *abhidheya* because it can develop one's original love of

Godhead, which is the goal of life. This goal is the living entity's topmost interest and greatest wealth. Thus one attains the platform of transcendental loving service unto the Lord."

To know the inconceivable nature, the Vedic authority alone should be accepted. There is one other consideration in this regard. The Vedic knowledge received through the *guru-parampara* is called *amnaya.* There are so many subjects in the *Vedas*, and there are various instructions for different qualifications. Among all qualifications, the qualification for devotional life is the topmost. By the strength of their devotional service, the previous *mahajanas* have awakened to selfrealization and thereby separately written instructions regarding the qualifications for devotional service as mentioned in the *Vedas.* Therefore the Vedic statements ascertained by the previous *mahajanas* as relating to the qualifications for devotion are all called *amnaya*, and it is necessary to learn them. It is impossible to enter into the inconceivable nature without receiving the full mercy of the spiritual master. The instruction of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in this regard is given in *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 20.127-136):

ihate drstanta—yaiche daridrera ghare sarvajna' asi' duhkha dekhi' puchaye tahare

"The following example may be given. Once a learned astrologer came to the house of a poor man and, seeing his distressed condition, questioned him.

tumi kene duhkhi, tomara ache pitr-dhana tomare na kahila, anyatra chadila jlvana

"The astrologer asked: Why are you unhappy? Your father was very wealthy, but he did not disclose his wealth to you because he died elsewhere.

sarvajnera vakye bare dhanera uddese aiche veda-purana jive 'krsna' upadese

"Just as the words of the astrologer Sarvajna gave news of the poor man's treasure, Vedic literatures advise one about Krsna consciousness when one is inquisitive to know why he is in a distressed material condition.

sarvajnera vakye mula-dhana anubandha sarva-sastre upadese, sri-k-sna'—sambandha

“By the words of the astrologer, the poor man's connection with the treasure was established. Similarly, Vedic literature advises us that our real connection is with Sri Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

bapera dhana ache—jnane dhana nahi paya tabe sarvajna kahe tare praptira upaya

“Although being assured of his father's treasure, the poor man cannot acquire this treasure by such knowledge alone. Therefore the astrologer had to inform him of the means whereby he could actually find the treasure.

ei sthane ache dhana—yadi daksine khudibe bhimarula-barul' uthibe, dhana na paibe

“The astrologer said: The treasure is in this place, but if you dig toward the southern side, the wasps and drones will rise, and you will not get your treasure.

pascime' khudibe, taha yaksa' eka haya se vighna karibe,—dhane hata na padaya

“If you dig on the western side, there is a ghost who will create such a disturbance that your hands will not even touch the treasure.

uttare' khudile ache krsna ajagare' dhana nahi pabe, khudite gilibe sabare

“If you dig on the northern side, there is a big black snake that will devour you if you attempt to dig up the treasure.

purva-dike tate mati alpa khudite dhanera jhari padibeka tomara hatete

“However, if you dig up a small quantity of dirt on the eastern side, your hands will immediately touch the pot of treasure.

aiche sastra kahe,—karma, jnana, yoga tyaji' bhaktye' krsna vasa haya, bhaktye tanre bhaji

“Revealed scriptures conclude that one should give up fruitive activity, speculative knowledge, and the mystic yoga system and instead take to devotional service, by which Krsna can be fully satisfied.”

When a person who desires spiritual perfection hears the conclusions regarding the soul from the spiritual master, then his heart becomes pure and he proceeds towards the lotus feet of Krsna. *Amnaya* is the only authority regarding the goal of life. One should consider the other nine realities through this authority, and this understanding manifests in the pure heart on the strength of *amnaya*. This is called self-realization, and this is the basis of life's goal.

Regarding the first reality, the *amnaya* says the Supreme Brahman, Sri Hari, is the only worshipable Lord. His impersonal conception is called Brahman, which is nothing but His bodily effulgence. That Supreme Lord Hari in one of His expansions becomes the Supersoul or controller who creates, maintains, and destroys the universes. Lord Hari is none other than Krsna, the Supersoul is none other than Visnu, and His bodily effulgence is none other than Brahman. By discussing the truth about the omni-potent Lord Hari, all one's doubts regarding the Supreme Lord are cleared. Until these doubts are cleared, one cultivates knowledge by discussing impersonal Brahman as opposite to material knowledge. Again, in order to understand the Supersoul, the expansion of the Lord, *astanga-yoga* is conceived. Only when one is freed from all doubts does he attain unflinching devotion to Krsna.

According to the knowledge of *amnaya,* the second reality is considered as follows: The Supreme Lord Hari is naturally full of inconceivable potencies. Through one of His potencies He is manifested as indistinct Brahman. This is His impersonal potency. Again, through His unlimited potencies, including Brahman and Paramatma, He manifests His supremacy as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although the impersonal and personal potencies are contained in Him, the personal potencies are predominant. As stated in the *Svetasvatara Upanisad:*

parasya saAtir vividhaiva srFyate sva@0aviAa jnana-@ala-Ariya ca

“His potencies are multifarious, and thus His deeds are automatically performed as a natural sequence.” The spiritual potencies known as *sandhina, samvit,* and *01adin*a—the Lord's potencies of eternal existence, cognizance, and bliss—are known by the pure devotees.

About the third reality, the *amnaya* says that the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna is full of spiritual *rasas,* or mellows. By the power of those *rasas,* both the spiritual and material worlds become maddened. That is the constitution of Lord

Krsna. Therefore Lord Krsna has said: “I am the source of Brahman.” Due to the power of those supreme *rasas* there are unlimited varieties in both the spiritual and material worlds. The *rasa* in the spiritual world is pure; the *rasa* of this material world is His shadow. Yet by the Lord's inconceivable potency the unlimited *rasas* of the spiritual world have been manifested in the Vrndavana pastimes of this world. The pure spirit soul is eligible for spiritual *rasa.* To attain that supreme *rasa* is the living entity's *dharma,* or duty. A living entity attains that on the strength of his devotional service. Attaining the Supreme Brahman is dry, or devoid of *rasa.* That is never to be strived for. There is no manifestation of *rasa* in the realization of Paramatma. Only devotional service to Krsna is full of *rasa.*

While considering the fourth reality, the *amnaya* says that the living entities are minute particles of the spiritual sun, Krsna, and they are innumerable. As the spiritual world is manifested by Krsna's *cit,* or spiritual, potency and as the material world is manifested by the inferior illusory energy, the living entities are similarly manifested by a portion of the spiritual energy. Krsna's spiritual form has all qualities in full, and those qualities are naturally present in the living entities in minute quantity. The independent nature of Krsna is found insignificantly in the living entities. For this reason the living entities claim to be independent. As a result, all living entities have developed different propensities. By one propensity the living entity searches for his own happiness, and by another propensity he searches for Krsna's happiness. Thus living entities are divided into two groups— those searching for their own happiness and those searching for Krsna's happiness. Those who search for Krsna's happiness are called *nitya-mukta,* and those who search for their own happiness are called *nitya-baddha.* In this regard, all inconceivable natures are under the subordination of spiritual time. The time factor of the spiritual nature is a state of eternal present. But in the inferior illusory energy there are three states of existence—past, present, and future. So whatever considerations arise in this regard, if related with the spiritual time factor, then no doubts will remain; but if seen otherwise, then doubts will remain. Why did a pure spirit soul search for his own happiness? If one puts forward such a question, then doubts arising from the material time factor will manifest. If one can give up such doubts then he can perform devotional service, otherwise there will only be a series of arguments. If arguments are related to the inconceivable nature, then *anarthas* arise.

The teachings of *amnaya* regarding the fifth reality is this: The living entities who are searching for their own happiness accept Maya, who is situated nearby,

and thus enjoy happiness and distress under the grip of material time. Karma is nothing but a blind wheel created by Maya. Those who have not contacted Maya have no connection with karma. The living entities who are searching for their own pleasure receive from the wheel of Maya gross and subtle bodies as a means to enjoy. This blind wheel is found in unlimited forms, but just as it was easy for a living entity to enter, it will be easy to leave at the time of liberation.

The living entities who are under the blind wheel of Maya are called *nitya-baddha*. In this regard, the word *nitya* is applied in regard to material time. When by the touch of spiritual substance the spiritual time factor is awakened, then their conditioned nature is seen as temporary. By the mercy of sadhus, *mahajanas*, and Krsna, and by the strength of many lifetimes of pious activities in devotional service, the conditioned soul achieves auspiciousness. As stated in *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 22.45) and the *Srmad Bhagavatam* (10.51.53):

kona bhagye karo samsara ksayonmukha haya

sadhu-sange tabe krsne rati upajaya

bhavapavargo bhramato yada bhavej

janasya tarhy acyuta sat-samagamah

sat-sangamo yarhi tadaiva sad-gatau paravarese tvayi jayate ratih

“By good fortune, one becomes eligible to cross the ocean of nescience, and when one's term of material existence decreases, one may get an opportunity to associate with pure devotees. By such association, one's attraction to Krsna is awakened. O my Lord! O infallible Supreme Person! When a person wandering throughout the universes becomes eligible for liberation from material existence, he gets an opportunity to associate with devotees. When he associates with devotees, his attraction for You is awakened. You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the highest goal of the supreme devotees and the Lord of the universe.” By the association of sadhus, material distress is vanquished; by the mercy of Krsna, one attains firm faith. Then by the strength of his devotional service and Krsna's mercy, a living entity cuts the bondage of Maya and attains Krsna's service. By the mercy of Krsna, the *baddha-mukta-jlvas* (those who achieve freedom from bondage) easily attain *salokya*, the abode of Krsna, with those who have never entered into Maya because of searching for Krsna's happiness.

The conclusion of *amnaya* regarding the sixth reality is this: Lord Krsna and all other things are connected by a relationship of *acintya bhedabheda*, inconceivably simultaneously one and different. That is why the *Vedas* have many statements supporting oneness and many supporting difference. In the conclusions of those ignorant of the truth, only a portion of the *Vedas* are accepted. In the conclusions of the knowers of the truth, the purport of all the *Vedas* is accepted. Those who have a thirst for worshiping the Lord learn from the teachings of *amnaya* that Lord Krsna is all-pervading and one without a second. Sri Krsna is the Absolute Truth. That Absolute Truth possesses all energies. Although the living entities and the material world are manifested by His energies, still He remains without a second. The ingredients are constitutionally nondifferent from Krsna; but in the material creation, everything other than Krsna is a transformation of His energy and therefore eternally separate from Him. This eternal oneness and difference is naturally inconceivable because it is beyond the range of the living entity's material intelligence. When the living entity's spiritual intelligence is awakened, pure knowledge of the inconceivable oneness and difference is aroused. Keeping firm faith in the statements of *amnaya*, by the mercy of Krsna the devotees can clearly see the truth of the inconceivable oneness and difference. If we use material consideration to understand this, it becomes theoretical. When one achieves knowledge of these seven realities through self-realization by the strength of *amnaya,* then it may be said that one has *sambandha-jnana*, knowledge of one's relationship with the Lord. In reply to Srila Sanatana Gosvami's questions, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has elaborately spoken on the science of one's relationship with the Lord. As given in *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 20.102):

ke ami, kene amaya jare ta&a-traya

iha nahi jani, kemane hita haya

“Who am I? Why do the threefold miseries always give me trouble? If I do not know this, how can I be benefited?” Those persons who want the greatest benefit, in the form of achieving devotion to Krsna, should all ask these questions to their spiritual master. By hearing the proper answers to these questions from the mouth of one's guru, all one's doubts will be cleared and firm faith will awaken. Do not give up deliberation as useless. As stated in *Caitanya-caritamrta (Adi* 2.117):

siddhanta baliya citte na kara alasa

iha ha-ite krsne lage sudrdha manasa

“A sincere student should not neglect the discussion of such conclusions, considering them controversial, for such discussions strengthen the mind. Thus one's mind becomes attached to Sri Krsna.”

Now see, among ten realities, the first eight are related with the authority and one's relationship with the Lord. One will receive all information from Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's answer to Sanatana Gosvami.

Regarding authority, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's statement is given in *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 20.124):

veda-sastra kahe—sambandha' abhidheya' prayojana'

“The Vedic literatures give information about *sambandha,* the conditioned soul's relationship with Krsna, *abhidheya,* the regulated activities of the conditioned soul for reviving that relationship, and *prayojana,* the ultimate goal of life.”

Regarding the second basic truth, Caitanya Mahaprabhu has said in *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 20.152, 155, 157):

krsnera svarupa-vicara suna, sanatana advaya-jnana-tattva, vraje vrajendra-nandana

svayam bhagavan krsna, govinda' para nama sarvaisvarya-purna yanra goloka—nitya-dhama

jnana, yoga, bhakti,—tina sadhanera vase brahma, atma, bhagavan—trividha prakase

“O Sanatana, please hear about the eternal form of Lord Krsna. He is the Absolute Truth, devoid of duality, but present in Vrndavana as the son of Nanda Maharaja. The original Supreme Personality of Godhead is Krsna. His original name is Govinda. He is full of all opulences, and His eternal abode is known as Goloka Vrndavana. There are three kinds of spiritual processes for understanding the Absolute Truth—the processes of speculative knowledge, mystic yoga, and *bhakti-yoga*. According to these three processes, the Absolute

Truth is manifested as Brahman, Paramatma, and Bhagavan.”

Regarding Krsna's energies, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has stated in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 20.111):

krsnera svabhavika tina-sakti-parinati cic-chakti, jlva-sakti, ara mayaSakti

“Lord Krsna naturally has three energetic transformations, and these are known as the spiritual potency, the living entity potency, and the illusory potency.”

Krsna is full of *rasa.* As explained by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 20.153):

sarva-adi, sarva-amsa, kisora-sekhara cid-ananda-deha, sarvasraya, sarvesvara

“Krsna is the original source of everything and the sum total of everything. He appears as the supreme youth, and His whole body is composed of spiritual bliss. He is the shelter of everything and master of everyone.”

The instruction of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu regarding the constitutional position of the living entity is given in *Caitanya-caritamrita (Madhya* 20.108-109):

jlvera svarupa'—haya krsnera nitya-dasa' sŭryamsa-kirana, yaiche agni-jvala-caya

“The living entity's constitutional position is to be an eternal servant of Krsna. He is like a molecular particle of sunshine or fire.”

Regarding conditioned living entities, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu gives the following description in *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 22.10, 20.117):

sei vibhinnamsa jiva—dui ta' prakara eka—nitya-mukta', eka—nitya-samsara'

krsna bhuli' sei jiva anadi-bahirmukha ataeva maya tare deya samsara-duhkha

“The living entities *[jivas]* are divided into two categories. Some are eternally liberated, and others are eternally conditioned. Forgetting Krsna, the living entity has been attracted by the external feature from time immemorial. Therefore the illusory energy [maya] gives him all kinds of misery in his material existence.” Concerning the liberated living entities, the Lord says in the

Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya 22.11):

nitya-mukta'—nitya krsna-carane unmukha k-sna-parisada' nama, bhunje seva-sukha

“Those who are eternally liberated are always awake to Krsna consciousness, and they render transcendental loving service at the feet of Lord Krsna. They are to be considered eternal associates of Krsna, and they are eternally enjoying the transcendental bliss of serving Krsna.”

Regarding simultaneous oneness and difference, the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 20.108) says:

krsnera tatastha-sakti' bhedabheda-prakasa

“The living entity is the marginal energy of Krsna and a manifestation simultaneously one and different from the Lord.”

When the living entities' relationship with the Lord is revived by the association of *amnaya*, then *abhidheya* is understood. Devotional service to Sri Krsna is that *abhidheya*. The purport is that whatever the scriptures specify as one's prime duty is called *abhidheya*. In this regard Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu says in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 22.17-18):

krsna-bhakti haya abhidheya-pradhana bhakti-mukha-niriksaka karma-yoga-jnana

ei saba sadhanera ati tuccha bala krsna-bhakti vina taha dite nare phala

“Devotional service to Krsna is the chief function of the living entity. There are different methods for the liberation of the conditioned soul—karma, *jnana*, yoga, and *bhakti*—but all are dependent on *bhakti*. But for devotional service, all other methods for spiritual self-realization are weak and insignificant. Unless one comes to the devotional service of Lord Krsna, *jnana* and yoga cannot give the desired results.”

Sadhana-bhakti is called *abhidheya*. That *sadhana-bhakti* is divided into two —*vaidhi* and *raganuga*. *Vaidhi-sadhana-bhakti* is of many varieties. In some places sixty-four limbs are given, and in some places nine limbs are given. The preaching of ninefold devotional service is given in the *Srimad Bhagavatam*

(7.5.23):

sravanam kirtanam visnoh smaranam pada-sevanam

arcanam vandanam dasyam sakhyam atma-nivedanam

“Prahlada Maharaja said: Hearing and chanting about the transcendental holy name, form, qualities, paraphernalia, and pastimes of Lord Visnu, remembering them, serving the lotus feet of the Lord, offering the Lord respectful worship with sixteen types of paraphernalia, offering prayers to the Lord, becoming His servant, considering the Lord one's best friend, and surrendering everything unto Him (in other words, serving Him with the body, mind, and words) these nine processes are accepted as pure devotional service.”

When a conditioned living entity engages in service at the lotus feet of Krsna with his mind, body, and words, that is called *bhakti.* The differences in *bhakti* from karma and *jnana* are very subtle. The limbs of *bhakti* and karma often appear similar. When those limbs are connected with separate desires, they turn into limbs of karma. When those limbs are connected with dry thoughts of Brahman, they turn into limbs of *jnana.* In some limbs, neither karma or *jnana* are involved. The fruits of action that lead one to the service of Krsna alone are called limbs of *bhakti.* The fruits of action that lead to one's own enjoyment are called karma. The activities that lead to merging with the Lord are called impersonal *jnana.* Therefore Srila Rupa Gosvami has given the symptoms of *bhakti* in the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (1.1.9) as follows:

anyabhilasita-sunyam jnana-karmady-anavnam anukulyena krsnanu- sllanam bhaktir uttama

“One should render transcendental loving service to the Supreme Lord Krsna favorably and without desire for material profit or gain through fruitive activities or philosophical speculation. That is called pure devotional service.”

To perform the limbs of devotional service according to the dictation of *vidhi*, or prescribed rules, is called *vaidhi-sadhana-bhakti.* The service performed out of spontaneous attachment to Krsna is called *raga-bhakti.* The devotion of the Vrajavasis is called *ragatmika,* and imitation of their devotional service is called *raganuga-bhakti. Vaidhi-bhakti* starts from *sraddha* and proceeds up to *rati,* when it becomes one with *raganuga-bhakti. Raganuga-bhakti* is always forceful. This is the ninth principle.

According to the statements of *amnaya*, the tenth principle is that *prema* is the *prayojana*, or supreme goal. The stages from *sadhana-bhakti* up to the attainment of *prema* are described in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 23.9-13) by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu as follows:

kona bhagye kona jlvera sraddha' yadi haya

tabe sei jlva sadhu-sanga' ye karaya

“If, by good fortune, a living entity develops faith in Krsna, he begins to associate with devotees.

sadhu-sanga haite haya sravana-kirtana' sadhana-bhaktye haya sarvanartha-nivartana'

“When one is encouraged in devotional service by the association of devotees, one becomes free from all unwanted contamination by following the regulative principles and chanting and hearing.

anartha-nivrtti haile bhaktye nistha' haya nistha haite sravanadye ruci' upajaya

“When one is freed from all unwanted contamination, he advances with firm faith.

When firm faith in devotional service awakens, a taste for hearing and chanting also awakens.

ruci haite bhaktye haya asakti' pracura asakti haite citte janme krsne prlty-ankura

“after taste is awakened, a deep attachment arises, an/ from that attachment the seed of love for TUVWa grows in the heart.

sei bhava' gadha haile dhare prema'-nama sei prema—prayojana' sarvananda-dhama

“When that ecstatic emotional stage intensifies, it is called love of Godhead. Such love is life's ultimate goal and the reservoir of all pleasure.”

Those who have doubts in these ten principle teachings of Sri Caitanya

Mahaprabhu are not qualified for devotional service. When doubts arise, one's devotional service becomes corrupted, desires are polluted, unwanted results are achieved, and thus everything is ruined. Therefore those who have a desire for pure devotional service should perform devotional service with firm confidence.

Dhairya Patience

For the practitioner of devotional service, *dhairya*, patience, is extremely necessary. Those who possess the quality of *dhairya* are called *dhlra,* sober. Due to lack of this quality, men become restless. Those who are impatient cannot do any work. By the quality of *dhairya*, a practitioner controls first himself and then the whole world. In the first verse of *Sra Upadesamrta* the symptoms of *dhairya* are explained:

vaco vegam manasah krodha-vegam jihva-vegam udaropastha-vegam

etan vegan yo visaheta dharah sarvam apmam prthivm sa sisyat

“a sober person who can tolerate the urge to speak, the mind's demands, the actions of anger, and the urges of the tongue, belly, and genitals is qualified to make disciples all over the world.”

There are six types of urges: namely, the urges of speech, mind, anger, belly, tongue, and genitals. With a desire to speak more, a person becomes talkative. If speech is not regulated, then enmity arises from talking about others. To speak uselessly is the business of a fool; but out of a desire to unnecessarily engage in speech the materialists always waste time and face so many distresses. Pious people observe *mauna-vrata,* or silence, in order to get rid of this disturbance. That is why the *rsis* have made provisions for observing various vows like *mauna-vrata*. The practitioners of devotional service should not speak unnecessarily. If you do have to speak unnecessarily, better to keep quiet. Besides topics regarding Krsna, all other topics are unnecessary. But to speak about the subjects favorable to devotional service is not unnecessary. Therefore devotees should speak only on topics about Lord Hari or those favorable to such topics. all other topics will be counted in the category of the urge to speak. One who is able to control the urge to speak is a sober person.

It is the duty of a sober person to tolerate the urge of the mind. Until one is habituated to control the urge of the mind, how can one perform devotional service with attention? A materialist sits in the chariot of the mind and never gets relief from its various urges, except during sleep. Even during sleep many thoughts such as good and bad dreams come. In order to regulate the urges of the mind, *rsis* have propounded *astanga-yoga* and *raja-yoga*. But the

Lord's prescription is that one should regulate the mind from the inferior tastes by giving it a higher taste. Those who are on the path of devotional service can easily regulate the mind. The mind cannot remain without urges. If urged towards spiritual subjects, the mind is properly engaged and it will not hanker for insignificant subjects. Many people think that without *astanga-yoga* there is no alternative to regulate the mind. But Patanjali Muni has accepted that just as *astanga-yoga* regulates the mind, *bhakti-yoga* can also. Meditation on the Supreme Lord as propounded by Patanjali is not pure devotional service, rather it is *sakama-bhakti*, or motivated. If devotional service is performed for the purpose of regulating the mind, then it is certainly not devoid of material desires. Favorable cultivation of devotional service in relationship to Krsna is the real meaning of pure *bhakti*. Therefore whenever pure devotional service is performed, joyfulness of the mind automatically arises from amongst extraneous fruits. *Sramad Bhagavatam* (7.1.32) states: *tasmat kenapy upayena manah krsne nivesayet*—"Somehow or other, one must consider the form of Krsna very seriously." If one follows this instruction, then the mind will be engaged at the lotus feet of Krsna and it will not easily wander into other subjects. For the practitioner, the urge of the mind is regulated by pure cultivation of favorable devotional service in relationship to Krsna. By carefully meditating on this subject, one can know the inherent differences between yoga and *bhakti*.

To restrain the urge of anger is compulsory for those who are thirsty for devotional service. Anger arises when a man's lust is unfulfilled. When one is angry the result gradually leads one to ruination. It is said in *Sra Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 19.149): *krsna-bhakta—niskama, ataeva Santa'*—"Because a devotee of Lord Krsna is desireless, he is peaceful." No insignificant lust can remain in the heart of one who relishes pure devotional service. Therefore there is no possibility of anger arising in his mind. Those whose devotional service is motivated cannot conquer anger. It is not possible to conquer anger by intelligence alone. In a very short time attachment for sense enjoyment overcomes the function of the intelligence and gives anger a place in its kingdom. It is seen in the song of the Avanti *brahmana* from the *Sramad Bhagavatam* (11.23.33-35, 37, 40) that he was able to quickly control anger.

tarn vai pravayasam bhiksum avadhutam asaj-janah drstva paryabhavan bhadra bahvlbhih paribhutibhih

"O kind Uddhava, seeing him as an old, dirty beggar, rowdy persons would dishonor him with many insults.

kecit tri-venum jagrhur eke patram kamandalum

patham caike 'ksa-sutram ca kantham carani kecana pradaya ca punas tani darsitany adadur muneh

“Some of these persons would take away his *sannyasa* rod, and some the waterpot which he was using as a begging bowl. Some took his deerskin seat, some his chanting beads, and some would steal his torn, ragged clothing. Displaying these things before him, they would pretend to offer them back but would then hide them again.

annam ca bhaiksya-sampannam bhunjanasya sarit-tate mutrayanti 3a papisthal sthaBanty asya 3a murdhani

“When he was sitting on the bank of a river about to partake of the food that he had collected by his begging, such sinful rascals would come and pass urine on it, and they would dare to spit on his head.

ksipanty eke Bajananta esa dharma-dhBajal sathal ksana-Bitta imam B-ttim agrahat sBa-janojjhita1

“They would criticize and insult him, saying: This man is just a hypocrite and a cheat. He makes a business of religion simply because he lost all his wealth and his family threw him out.

eBam sa bhautikam (ulkham (aiBikam (aihikam ca yat bhoktaByam atmano (istam praptam praptam abudhyata

“The *brahmana* understood that all his suffering—from other living beings, from the higher forces of nature, and from his own body—was unavoidable, being allotted him by Providence.”

That Avanti mendicant then spoke the following verse in the *Srama(BhagaBatam* (11.23.57):

etam sa asthaya paratma-nistham adhyasitam purBatamair mahadbhil

aham tarisyami (uranta-param tamo mukundanghri-niseBayaiBa

“I shall cross over the insurmountable ocean of nescience by being firmly fixed

in the service of the lotus feet of Krsna. This was approved by the previous *acaryas,* who were fixed in firm devotion to the Lord, Paramatma, the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

This *paratma-nista*, being firmly fixed in the service of the lotus feet of Krsna, is sometimes followed by householders like Janaka and sometimes by *sannyasas* like Sanaka and Sanatana. In both circumstances the *paratma-nista* is the same.

Without this *paratma-nista* one cannot cross the insurmountable ocean of nescience. Service to Lord Mukunda is the only shelter; one will be delivered by accepting that. We can clearly see from this song of the Avanti *brahmana* that it is impossible to cross the material ocean by the process of yoga. By unflinching devotion to Krsna, everything is achieved. One who can control the urges of speech, mind, and anger by devotional service is called *dhara.*

It is everyone's duty to subdue the urge of the tongue. Materialistic persons are always busy trying to enjoy the six kinds of tastes by chewing, sucking, and so on. "Today I will enjoy spiced rice with non-veg, today I will endeavor for *kitri,* today I will enjoy the finest drinks." Hankering like this, the materialist always wanders. The more the tongue eats, the more its hankering increases. For those who wander for the pleasure of the tongue, attaining Krsna is very difficult. Sri Caitanya

Mahaprabhu has said in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 6.225-227):

vairagl hana kare jihvara lalasa

paramartha yaya, ara haya rasera vasa

vairaglra krtya—sada nama-sanklrtana

saka-patra-phala-mule udara-bharana

jihvara lalase yei iti-uti dhaya

sisnodara-pamyana krsna nahi paya

"If a renunciate is eager for his tongue to taste different foods, his spiritual life will be lost, and he will be subservient to the tastes of his tongue. The duty of a person in the renounced order is to chant the Hare Krsna mantra always. He

should satisfy his belly with whatever vegetables, leaves, fruits, and roots are available.

One who is subservient to the tongue and who thus goes here and there, devoted to the genitals and the belly, cannot attain Krsna."

One should fill his belly with whatever is easily available. By offering Krsna foods in the mode of goodness and honoring them as *prasada*, the tongue is satisfied and service to Krsna is cultivated. If palatable *prasada* is easily available, then the tongue's greed will gradually be controlled rather than increased.

The urge of the belly is a disturbance. The requirement of the stomach is to eat for the maintenance of the life and mitigation of hunger. Those who are thirsty for devotional service should maintain their life by moderate eating. Those who endeavor to overeat are called gluttons. One of the qualities of devotees is *mita-bhuk*, eating what is necessary. By eating less, the body remains healthy and does not disturb one's devotional service. Those who have no strength to tolerate the urge of the stomach are always greedy to eat. Those who are firmly convinced that nothing can be eaten besides *krsna-prasada* are especially able to tolerate the urge of the belly. Restrictions like fasting on prescribed days are also models of instruction for controlling the urge of the stomach.

The urge of the genital is formidable for persons who are averse to the Lord. In the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.5.11) it is said: *loke vyavayamisa-madya-seva nitya hi jantor na hi tatra codana*—"In this material world the conditioned soul is always inclined to sex, meat-eating, and intoxication. Therefore religious scriptures never actually encourage such activities." The purport of this statement from the *Srimad Bhagavatam* is confidential. Those who possess a material body made of flesh and blood are always inclined to associate with women. To minimize this inclination, the marriage ceremony is recommended. Those who wish to get free from the codes of marriage are almost like animals. But those who have crossed beyond the rules of this natural inclination by the association of devotees and the strength of their service and have thus attained attraction for spiritual subject matters, for them associating with the opposite sex is very insignificant. Persons who are filled with attachment for material enjoyment can never tolerate the urge of the genital. Many of them engage in illicit activities. Regarding this propensity, those who thirst for devotional service are divided into two groups. Those whose attraction has been purified by

the strength of *sadhu-sanga* give up the association of women altogether and continually engage in devotional service. Persons in this group are known as renounced Vaisnavas. Those whose propensity for associating with women has not been destroyed accept the codes of marriage and remain as householders while engaging in devotional service. Associating with women as prescribed in the scriptures means to control the urge of the genitals.

When one properly tolerates the above mentioned six urges, that is favorable for his devotional service. And when those urges are strong, that is unfavorable for one's devotional service. To subdue these six urges is called *dhairya.* As long as one has a material body these propensities cannot be totally uprooted, but by properly engaging them in their appropriate subjects they no longer remain faulty. Therefore Sri Narottama dasa Thakura has written in his *Prema-bhakti-candrika* as follows:

kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, matsarya, dambha-saha sthane sthane niyukta kariba

ananda kari' hrdaya, ripu kari' parajaya,

anayase govinda bhajiba.

kama' krsna-karmarpane, krodha' bhakta-dvesa jane, lobha' sadhu-sange hari-katha

moha' ista-labha vine, mada' k-sna-guna-gane,

niyukta kariba yatha tatha.

“I will engage lust, anger, greed, illusion, madness, envy, and pride in appropriate ways, and by defeating these enemies I will feel happiness in my heart as I peacefully worship Govinda. I will engage lust by offering it in Krsna's service. Anger I will direct towards those who are envious of the devotees. I will be greedy to hear the topics of Hari in the association of devotees. I will feel illusioned without achieving my worshipable Lord. I will be maddened while singing the glories of Krsna. In this way I will engage these enemies in their proper places.” The confidential meaning of this song is that the duty of an intelligent person is to direct these urges away from their respective subjects and make them favorable to devotional service. That can only be done with patience.

There is another meaning applicable to the word *dhairya*. Those who engage in *sadhana* desire to attain the results. Karmis hope to attain heavenly happiness by fruitive activities; *jnanis* hope to attain liberation by speculative knowledge, and devotees hope to please Krsna by their devotion. Being impatient due to prolonged *sadhana*, some people fall from the path to the ultimate goal; therefore a practicing devotee who desires to achieve his goal attains that result only when he becomes patient. "Krsna must be merciful to me either today or after one hundred years or in some other birth. I will take shelter of His lotus feet with determination and never leave." This type of *dhairya*, patience, is most desirable for the practitioners of devotional service.

Tat-tat-karma-pravartana Various activities favorable for devotional service

Srila Rupa Gosvami has enjoined the system of *tat-tat-karma-pravartanat*, acting according to the regulative principles, for those aspiring to perform devotional service. In the *Upadesamrta*, activities by which pure devotional service is

cultivated are called *tat-tat-karma*, prescribed duties. Sri Krsna tells Uddhava in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.19.20-24):

sraddhamrta-kathayam me sasvan mad-anukTrtanam parinistha ca pujayam stutibhih stavanam mama

adarah paricaryayam mad-bhakta-pujabhyadhika

sarvangair abhivandanam sarva-bhutesu man-matih

mad-arthesv anga-cesta ca   vacasa mad-guneranam

mayy arpanam ca manasah   sarva-kama-vivarjanam

mad-arthe 'rtha-parityago istam dattam hutam japtam

bhogasya ca sukhasya ca mad-artham yad vratam tapah

evam dharmair manusyanam uddhavatma-nivedinam mayi sanjayate bhaktih ko 'nyo 'rtho 'syavasisyate

“Firm faith in the blissful narrations of My pastimes, constant chanting of My glories, unwavering attachment to ceremonial worship of Me, praising Me through beautiful hymns, great respect for My devotional service, offering obeisances with the entire body, performing first-class worship of My devotees, consciousness of Me in all living entities, offering of ordinary, bodily activities in My devotional service, offering words to describe My qualities, offering the mind to Me, rejection of all material desires, giving up wealth for My devotional service, renouncing material sense gratification and happiness, and performing all desirable activities such as charity, sacrifice, chanting, vows, and austerities with the purpose of achieving Me—these constitute actual religious principles, by which those human beings who have actually surrendered themselves to Me automatically develop love for Me. What other purpose or goal could remain for My devotee?”

Based on these instructions of the Lord, Srila Rupa Gosvami has divided these activities into sixty-four items in his *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu.* Srila Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami has written about those activities in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 22.115-129) as follows:

guru-padasraya, dTksa, gurura sevana sad-dharma-siksa, prccha, sadhu-marganugamana

“On the path of regulative devotional service, one must observe the following items: (1) One must accept a bona fide spiritual master. (2) Accept initiation from him. (3) Serve him. (4) Receive instructions from the spiritual master and make inquiries in order to learn devotional service. (5) Follow in the footsteps of the previous *acaryas* and follow the directions given by the spiritual master.

krsna-prTtye bhoga-tyaga, krsna-tTrthe vasa yavan-nirvaha-pratigraha, ekadasy-upavasa

“The next steps are as follows: (6) One should be prepared to give up everything for Krsna's satisfaction, and one should also accept everything for Krsna's satisfaction. (7) One must live in a place where Krsna is present—a city like Vrndavana or Mathura or a Krsna temple. (8) One should acquire a livelihood that is just sufficient to keep body and soul together. (9) One must fast on Ekadasi day.

dhatry-asvattha-go-vipra-vaisnava-pujana seva-namaparadhadi dure visarjana

“One should worship *dhatrl* trees, banyan trees, cows, *brahmanas,* and devotees of Lord Visnu. One should avoid offenses against devotional service and the holy name.

avaisnava-sanga-tyaga, bahu-sisya na kariba bahu-grantha-kalabhyasa-vyakhyana varjiba

“The twelfth item is to give up the company of nondevotees. (13) One should not accept an unlimited number of disciples. (14) One should not partially study many scriptures just to be able to give references and expand explanations.

hani-labhe sama, sokadira vasa na ha-iba anya-deva, anya-sastra ninda na kariba

“Fifteen: The devotee should treat loss and gain equally. (16) The devotee should not be overwhelmed by lamentation. (17) The devotee should not worship demigods, nor should he disrespect them. Similarly, the devotee should not study or criticize other scriptures.

visnu-vaisnava-ninda, gramya-varta na suniba prani-matre manovakye udvega na diba

“Eighteen: The devotee should not hear Lord Visnu or His devotees blasphemed. (19) The devotee should avoid reading or hearing newspapers or mundane books that contain stories of love affairs between men and women or subjects palatable to the senses. (20) Neither by mind nor words should the devotee cause anxiety to any living entity, regardless how insignificant he may be.

sravana, klrtana, smarana, pujana, vandana paricarya, dasya, sakhya, atma-nivedana

“After one is established in devotional service, the positive actions are (1) hearing, (2) chanting, (3) remembering, (4) worshiping, (5) praying, (6) serving, (7) accepting servitorship, (8) becoming a friend, and (9) surrendering fully.

agre nrtya, glta, vijnapti, dandavan-nati abhyutthana, anuvrajya, tlrtha-grhe gati

“One should also (10) dance before the Deity, (11) sing before the Deity, (12) open one's mind to the Deity, (13) offer obeisances to the Deity, (14) stand

up before the Deity and the spiritual master just to show them respect, (15) follow the Deity or the spiritual master, and (16) visit different places of pilgrimage or go see the Deity in the temple.

parikrama, stava-patha, japa, sanklrtana dhupa-malya-gandha-mahaprasada-bhojana

“One should (17) circumambulate the temple, (18) recite various prayers, (19) chant softly, (20) chant congregationally, (21) smell the incense and flower garlands offered to the Deity, and (22) eat the remnants of food offered to the Deity.

aratrika-mahotsava-srlmurti-darsana nija-priya-dana, dhyana, tadiya-sevana

“One should (23) attend *arati* and festivals, (24) see the Deity, (25) present what is very dear to oneself to the Deity, (26) meditate, and (27) serve those related to the Lord.

tadiya'—tulasi, vaisnava, mathura, bhagavata ei carira seva haya krsnera abhimata

“Tadiya means the *tulasi* leaves, the devotees of Krsna, the birthplace of Krsna, Mathura, and the Vedic literature *Srimad Bhagavatam.* Krsna is very eager to see His devotee serve *tulasi*, Vaisnavas, Mathura, and *Bhagavatam.*

krsnarthe akhila-cesta, tat-k-pavalokana janma-dinadi-mahotsava lana bhakta-gana

“Thirty-one: One should perform all endeavors for Krsna. (32) One should look forward to His mercy. (33) One should partake of various ceremonies with devotees, ceremonies like Lord Krsna's birthday or Ramacandra's birthday.

sarvatha saranapatti, kartikadi-vrata catuh-sasti anga' ei parama-mahattva

“Thirty-four: One should surrender to Krsna in all respects. (35) One should observe particular vows like *kartika-vrata*. These are some of the sixty-four important items of devotional service.

sadhu-sanga, nama-kirtana, bhagavata-sravana mathura-vasa, sri-murtira sraddhaya sevana

“One should associate with devotees, chant the holy name of the Lord, hear *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, reside at Mathura, and worship the Deity with faith and veneration.

sakala-sadhana-srestha ei panca anga krsna-prema janmaya ei pancera alpa sanga

“These five limbs of devotional service are the best of all. Even a slight performance of these five awakens love for Krsna.”

Aspiring devotees should first take shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide guru. Without taking shelter of a guru, one cannot achieve anything auspicious. There are two types of people—one has developed intelligence and one has undeveloped intelligence. Those whose intelligence is undeveloped are absorbed in the so-called happiness of this world. If by chance they get the association of a *mahajana,* then they also become intelligent. Then they consider, “How unfortunate I am! I'm always engaged in sense gratification. I'm passing my days hankering for material enjoyment.” This initial association with a great soul is also called association with the guru by hearing. By good fortune, at this time faith is awakened. When faith is awakened, one endeavors for devotional service. Then it is essential for one to take shelter of the lotus feet of a guru. In this way by good fortune persons with undeveloped intelligence become intelligent and take shelter of the lotus feet of a guru.

What type of guru one should take shelter of is explained in the *sastras.* One who has conquered the six enemies beginning with lust, one who is pure, one who performs devotional service on the path of *raga*, one who is brahminical, one who knows the clear path of the *Vedas*, one who sadhus can respect as guru, one who is able to control the senses, one who is merciful to all living entities, one who is cultured, one who is without duplicity, and one who is truthful—this type of householder is fit to be a guru. All these qualities are considered in two ways. The principle quality of a guru is attachment to Krsna and detachment for what is not related with Krsna. All other qualities are secondary. That is why Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has said in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 8.127):

kiba vipra, kiba nyasi, sudra kene naya yei krsna-tattva-vetta, sei guru' haya

“Whether one is a *brahmana,* a *sannyasi,* or a *sudra*—regardless of what he is—he can become a spiritual master if he knows the science of Krsna.”

If one possess this principle symptom of a guru, then he is eligible to be guru even though he lacks one or two secondary symptoms. Being a *brahmana* and being a householder are counted as secondary symptoms. It is good if a person possesses these two secondary symptoms along with the principle qualification. But those who are defective in the principle symptom are unqualified to be guru even though they possess the other two. As stated in *Sri Padma Purana:*

mahabhagavata srestho brahmano vai gurur nrnam sarvesam eva lokanam asau pujyo yatha harih mahakula prasuto pi sarva yajnesu
diksitah sahasrasakhadhyayi ca na guruh syad avaisnavah

"Among all human beings the *brahmana* who is a *maha-bhagavata*, or great devotee, is topmost and qualified as guru. He is as worshipable as Lord Hari. A non-Vaisnava is never fit to be guru even if he has taken birth in a great family, performed all sacrifices, and studied many branches of the *Vedas."* After finding a qualified guru, a faithful disciple should serve him with firm conviction and without duplicity. One should accept initiation and *krsna-mantra* after pleasing the guru. Those who are averse to taking initiation and only make a drama of pseudo-*kirtana* while advertising themselves as Vaisnavas certainly cheat themselves. It is not the duty of materialistic persons to renounce the process of initiation because a few great souls like Jada Bharata did not take initiation. Initiation is a constitutional injunction for every birth of the living entity. If initiation is not seen in the life of a perfected soul, it should not be taken as an example. General rules are not changed because something happens to a particular person in a special situation. Sri Dhruva Maharaja went to Dhruvaloka in his material body; seeing that, should one waste time hoping for the same? The general rule is a living entity gives up his material body and goes to Vaikuntha in his spiritual body. General rules should be accepted by people in general. Whenever and whatever is desired by the Lord, who is full of inconceivable potencies, that only happens. Therefore we should never transgress the general rules. After pleasing the guru by serving him without duplicity, one should receive from him instructions on the Absolute Truth and initiation into chanting the holy name of the Lord.

After receiving initiation and instructions from a bona fide guru, a fortunate disciple should follow the path of the previous sadhus. Those who are proud neglect the previous *mahajanas* and create new paths. As a result, they soon proceed on their inauspicious path and ruin themselves. It is said in the *Skanda*

sa mrgyah sreyasam hetuh   panthah santapa-varjitah

anavapta-sramam purve   yena santah pratasthire

“One should strictly follow the easy path which the previous *mahajanas* have accepted. That path bestows great auspiciousness and is devoid of all misery.” By discussing the path of the previous sadhus, one gets determination, courage, and satisfaction. When we discuss the path of devotional service exhibited by Sri Rupa, Sri Sanatana, Sri Raghunatha, and Sri Haridasa Thakura, then we feel such happiness that it cannot be described. When the miscreant Mohammedans tortured Haridasa Thakura, he said:

khanda khanda hai' deha yaya yadi prana tabu ami vadane na chadi hari-nama

e saba jlvere krsna! karaha prasada mora drohe nahu e sabara aparadha

“Even if my body is cut into pieces and I loose my life, I will never give up chanting the Lord's holy name. O Krsna, please be merciful upon these poor souls, kindly excuse them for their offense of torturing me.”

Maintaining this type of determination and being compassionate to all living entities while always chanting the holy name of Krsna is the path of devotional service exhibited by the previous *mahajanas.* A path cannot be manufactured. Whatever path is there should be accepted by sadhus. Those who are proud and want fame try vigorously to discover new paths. Those who have good fortune from past lives give up pride and respect the established path. Those who are unfortunate promenade on a new path and thus cheat the world. Regarding such persons the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (1.2.46-47) quotes the *Brahma-yamala* as follows:

sruti-smrti-puranadi- pancaratra-vidhim vina aikantikl harer bhaktir utpatayaiva kalpate

bhaktir aikantiklveyam avicarat pratlyate vastu tastu tatha naiva yad asastrlyateksyate

“Devotional service of the Lord that ignores the authorized Vedic literatures like the *Upanisads, Puranas,* and *Narada-pancaratra* is simply an unnecessary disturbance in society. Such activities are born out of speculation and therefore they only superficially resemble unalloyed devotion because they

are disrespectful to the Vedic injunctions. Disrespecting Vedic injunctions falls in the category of atheism. Whenever there is disrespect for the scriptures, which are the Lord's instructions, that cannot be devotional service."

The purport is that although the path of devotion is of two kinds—*vaidhi* and *raganuga*—the previous *mahajanas* have clearly prescribed them according to one's qualification. These paths are explained in the scriptures such as the *sruti*, *smrti*, and *pancaratra*. Rejecting these paths, the new paths discovered by Lord Buddha and Dattatreya ultimately create disturbance. Due to improper consideration these new paths are advertised as unalloyed devotional service to Krsna, although they are not actually so. The proper path is exhibited in the Vedic literatures. Nowadays

many new paths are discovered, and they ultimately disappear along with their propounder.

Inquiring a6out *sad-dharma,* eterna! religious principles, is one .A the discipleFs

duties. ThereAore *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (1.2.47) quotes the Aollowing statement Arom the *Sra Naradlya Purana:*

sad-dharmasyavabodhaya yesam nirbandhinl matih

acirad eva sarvarthah sidhyaty esam abhlpsitah

"Those who are anxious to awaken their spiritual consciousness, who have unflinching intelligence, and who are not deviated, certainly attain the desired goal of life." As fortunate persons wish to follow the characteristics of the sadhusF devotional service, they similarly desire to know their duty. Unfortunate proud persons act just the opposite. As they search paths different from those of the sadhus, they disrespect the sadhusF determined conclusions while respecting their own. They do not care to preach the teachings of Mahapra6hu to the people of this world, rather they preach doctrines contradictory to those of Mahapra6hu. They do not know how much misfortune they are creating 6y this. Those who are simple endeavor to properly learn the teachings of the Lord from *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta.* The LordFs teachings are our only life. *Sad-dharma* lies in this alone.

The 6ona fide disciple especially tries to understand *sad-dharma.* If he cannot understand on his own, then he prays at the feet of his *siksa-guru* and learns

from him. Those who have this kind of determination to know *sad-dharma* quickly achieve their desired goal. The *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (1.1.9) says:

anyabhilasita-sunyam jnana-karmady-anavrtam anukulyena krsnanu- sllanam bhaktir uttama

“One should render transcendental loving service to the Supreme Lord Krsna favora6ly and without desire for material profit or gain through fruitive activities or philosophical speculation. That is called pure devotional service.” As long as this pure devotional symptom, in the form of understanding *sad-dharma*, has not clearly manifest in the heart of an inquisitive person, his heart remains covered with darkness and he cannot know what is pure devotional service. If one depends on his own speculation, then unalloyed devotional service will not manifest in his heart. We meet many so-called *panditas* who think they have understood the constitution of *bhakti* 6y their knowledge and intelligence. Some of them have concluded that devotional service mixed with *jnana* is pure *bhakti*, and some of them have concluded that devotional service mixed with karma is pure *bhakti*.

They are so proud that if they hear the teachings of *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta*, they say, “Everyone can make their own conclusion. What is the need for taking the conclusion of *Caitanya-caritamrta?*” These people never come in touch with *sad-dharma* 6ecause they have no desire to know it. The result of performing their own concocted new process of devotional service is they can never relish pure devotion. It is the duty of a *sadhaka* to give up personal enjoyment for the sake of Krsna. Sense gratification is called enjoyment. Dovetailing oneFs lust for sense gratification in the service of Krsna is renunciation of enjoyment. When one converts his world of enjoyment into what is favora6le for devotional service, thus giving up the spirit of enjoying those o6jects and accepting everything as *krsna-prasada*, then this is called renunciation of enjoyment.

To reside in a holy place related with Krsna is also a lim6 of *sadhana*. If one resides in Sri Dvaraka, Sri Mathura, on the bank of the Ganges, or at pastimes sites of the Lord, then one naturally remembers Krsna. What greater gain can there be than this?

At every stage of life one should accept only as much wealth as needed for the practice of devotional service. By desiring more than needed, *bhakti* will disappear. If wealth is not accepted according to one's need, however, then the

practice of devotional service will be hampered.

One should carefully respect *sri hari-vasara,* Ekadasi. By observing Ekadasi all the supporting principles of devotional service are practiced. The practice of devotional service becomes continuous by giving up all enjoyment and practicing devotional service once every fortnight.

For one who worships and meditates on the earth, banyan trees, *tulasi,* cows, *brahmanas,* and Vaisnavas, all his sinful reactions are diminished. By these activities one can please Krsna, because these objects are auspicious for the world. These ten limbs of devotional service are the preliminary activities for worshiping the Lord. For those who neglect these ten limbs, attaining devotional service and Krsna is very difficult.

Therefore those who are aspiring for devotional service should first take shelter of Sri Guru, take initiation and instruction from him, and serve him. They should also follow the behavior of the sadhus and learn the conclusions taught by the sadhus. In order to make one's life Krsna conscious, one should reside in a sacred place related to Krsna and give up the enjoyment of sense gratification for the service of Krsna. In one's ordinary dealings one should only accept the wealth that is necessary to favorably maintain Krsna's business. To practice devotional service one should observe fast days like Ekadasi and Janmastami. One should respect banyan trees in order to maintain the glories of this world, which is one of the Lord's opulences. These ten rules must be followed. And the following ten rules must be rejected, otherwise the practice of devotional service cannot be steady. One should not associate with persons who are averse to the Lord's service. One will have to meet such people in his ordinary dealings, but one should deal with them only until the work is finished. After the work is finished one should not deal with them. Those who have not had loving devotion to Krsna awakened in their heart are always proud of remaining under the shelter of *jnana* and karma. Therefore they are called *bhagavad-bahirmukha,* averse to Krsna. Those who worship many gods, those who are Mayavadis and thirsty for impersonal *jnana,* and those atheists who defy Vedic literatures are all *bhagavad-bahirmukha*, averse to Krsna.

One whose faith in pure devotional service has not developed should not be accepted as a disciple, otherwise the disciplic chain of devotional service will be polluted. One should give up the endeavor for starting new big projects, because it diminishes one's devotion to Krsna.

One should not read or explain various types of books, except those which lead to the advancement of devotional service. One should discuss those scriptures wherein devotional service is instructed and explained, such as the *Vedas, smrtis, Puranas, Pancaratra,* and the writings of the *mahajanas.* From books with other opinions, only useless arguments are learned.

The endeavor for food and clothing must always remain, either in household life or in renounced life. Therefore there is a need of generosity in such dealings.

alabdhe va vinaste va bhaksyacchadana-sadhane aviklava-matir bhutva harim eva dhiya smaret

"The mind of one who has taken shelter of the holy name is undisturbed even if food and clothes are not easily obtained or if they are obtained but then lost. Leaving behind all material attachments, he takes complete shelter of Govinda." The purport is that whether a *sadhaka* stays at home or in the forest, he will have to endeavor for food and clothing. A householder should find out his food and clothing through agriculture or business, protecting the citizens, or by serving others. A renunciate should accomplish this by begging alms. In those activities a devotee should not be agitated if food and clothing are not obtained or if they are obtained and then lost. He should peacefully remember Krsna.

Householders lament if they lose their wife, children, etc. But a practitioner of devotional service should not maintain this lamentation very long. They should quickly give up their lamentation and engage in the cultivation of Krsna consciousness. A renunciate should not lament if he does not possess a quilt, a waterpot, or other alms, or if these things are stolen by man or animal. A practicing Vaisnava should give up all urges like lamentation and anger, otherwise there will be obstacles in his constant remembrance of Krsna. It is explained in the *Padma Purana*:

sokamarsadibhir bhavair akrantam yasya manasam katham tasya mukundasya sphurttih sambhavana bhavet

"Within the heart of one who is full of anger or pride, or lamentation on the state of his wife or sons, there is no possibility of Krsna being manifest."

Those who endeavor for devotional service should only worship Krsna. They should not worship various demigods. But they should not also disrespect the demigods or the scriptures. When coming before a demigod, one should

offer respect, knowing them to be Krsna's servant. In the *Padma Purana* it is said:

harir eva sadaradhyah sarva-devesvaresvarah itare brahma-rudradya navajneyah kadacana

“Krsna, or Hari, is the master of all demigods, and therefore He is always worshipable. But this does not mean that one should not offer respect to the demigods headed by Brahma and Siva.” The purport is that the Supreme Lord is one, and others (Brahma and Siva) are His qualitative incarnations (*gunavataras*). Particular demigods are worshiped by people according to their qualifications. But Lord Visnu is the only worshipable Lord for people who are in the mode of goodness. After worshiping various demigods for many lifetimes, one's life becomes auspicious when he comes to the point of accepting Visnu as the only Supreme Lord. Lord Sri Krsna is the topmost manifestation of *visnu-tattva*. When a living entity transcends the three modes by worshiping in the mode of goodness, he attains the service of Lord Krsna.

One should be merciful and not cause anxiety to any living entity. The heart should always be filled with compassion for others. Exhibiting mercy to all living entities is one of the limbs of devotional service. A person aspiring for devotional service should carefully practice this characteristic.

It is most essential for an aspiring devotee to give up the ten offenses in chanting and the offenses in the matter of serving the Lord. For ordinary devotees there is some consideration of offenses in serving the Deity of the Lord. It is not possible to give up all the offenses in serving the Lord, but one must give up some of the offenses before entering the temple room. The ten offenses in chanting have been discussed in many places. The practitioner should carefully give up those offenses. For those who are negligent in this regard, endeavoring for devotional service becomes useless. It is written in the *Padma Purana:*

sarvaparadha krd api mucyate hari samsrayah harer apy aparadhan yah kuryad dvi-pada pamsanah namasrayah kadacit syat taraty eva sa namatah namno hi sarva suhrdo hy aparadhat pataty adhah

The purport is that if one takes shelter of Lord Hari, then all his offenses are vanquished. All offenses committed in the service of the Lord are destroyed by taking shelter of the holy names. The holy name alone delivers the Vaisnavas.

But those who have taken shelter of the holy names must give up the ten offenses in chanting. Otherwise they will surely fall down even though they have taken shelter of the holy names.

A practitioner should not allow blasphemy of Krsna or the Vaisnavas to enter his ears. Wherever such blasphemy is taking place, he should leave. Those with weak hearts who tarry out of social etiquette to hear blasphemy of Krsna or the Vaisnavas are gradually distracted from devotional service.

By careful practice of the above mentioned twenty limbs one's *bhava,* devotional sentiment, is awakened. The mercy of Krsna is the root cause of awakening *bhava.* Without *sadhu-sanga*, one cannot achieve the mercy of Krsna. The principle forms of *sadhu-sanga* are taking shelter of the lotus feet of the spiritual master, taking initiation from him, and serving him.

Among the other limbs of devotional service mentioned after these, accepting the symbols of a Vaisnava up to meditation come under the category of *arcana.* One should practice all these limbs of *bhakti* to the best of one's capacity after receiving them from the spiritual master. Servitude, friendship, and complete surrender are the activities for awakening *bhava*. In reality, these activities themselves become *bhava*. Only in the stage of *sadhana* are they counted as *sadhana-bhakti*.

Whatever one's most cherished items are in this world and whatever is very dear should be offered to Krsna—this statement has several meanings. The purport is that one should not enjoy anything just because it is very dear to oneself, but one should offer it to Krsna and enjoy it as His *prasada.*

Whatever ordinary and spiritual endeavors are there, when done for the sake of Krsna, they become auspicious. It is said in the *Narada Pancaratra* and quoted in the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu:*

laukikl vaidika vapi ya kriya kriyate mune hari-sevanukulaiva sa karya bhaktim icchata

“One should perform only those activities, either worldly or prescribed by Vedic rules and regulations, which are favorable for the cultivation of Krsna consciousness.”

Marriage and other purificatory ceremonies of the *smartas* are *vaidiki,* or

prescribed Vedic regulations, and social and bodily activities performed to

maintain one's status quo are *laukikl,* or worldly. Marriage is for the establishment of Krsna's family; producing children is for increasing Krsna's servants; offering oblations to the forefathers is for the satisfaction of Krsna's servants; feasting is for the gratification of Krsna's living entities—all these activities should be dovetailed in the favorable service of Krsna. Then one will not fall into the grip of unfavorable fruitive activities. The body, house, and everything else belongs to Krsna— thinking in this way one should protect the body, the house, and the community. This is called Krsna's family.

The whole life of a practitioner should be decorated with full surrender. Six types of surrender are explained in many places in the devotional scriptures. The life of a living entity is useless without surrender. The living entity should always worship Krsna with full surrender.

Items that are related to Krsna are called *tadlya.* Serving *tulasi* is the primary form of *tadlya-seva.* It is said in the *Skanda Purana:*

drsta sprsta tatha dhata klrtita manita sruta ropita sevita nityam pujita tulasi subha

navadha tulasim devim ye bhajanti dine dine yuga koti sahasrani te vasanti harer grhe

"*Tulasl* is auspicious in all respects. Simply by seeing, simply by touching, simply by remembering, simply by praying to, simply by bowing before, simply by hearing about, simply by sowing, simply by offering water to, or simply by worshiping *tulasi* there is always auspiciousness. Anyone who comes in touch with the *tulasi* tree in the above-mentioned nine ways lives eternally in the Vaikuntha world."

Literatures that substantiate devotion to Krsna are counted among *tadlya. Srimad Bhagavatam* is the topmost amongst them. In the same way, *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta* commands similar respect. Those who regularly read and hear these devotional scriptures are glorious.

Holy places associated with Lord Krsna, such as Mathura, are appropriate residences for a practitioner. Among such places, residence in Mathura is the topmost. Residing in Sridhama Navadvtpa is as good. It is written in *Sri*

Brahmanda Purana:

sruta smrta klrtita ca vancita preksita gata sprstasrita sevita ca mathurabhlstadayinl

“One who hears about, remembers, glorifies, desires to achieve, sees from a distance, comes near, touches, accepts as one's shelter, and serves Mathura achieves fulfillment of all desires.”

The devotees of Krsna are also counted among *tadlya.* It is written in the *Adi Purana*:

ye me bhakta-janah partha na me bhaktas ca te janah mad-bhaktanam ca ye bhaktas te me bhakta-tama matah

“Lord Krsna said to Arjuna: Those who are My direct devotees are actually not My devotees, but those who are the devotees of My devotees are factually My devotees.”

In regard to serving devotees, Srila Rupa Gosvami has quoted the following verse

yavanti bhagavad bhakter angani kathitaniha prayastavanti tad bhakta bhakter api budha vidhuh

The purport is that almost all the above mentioned limbs of serving Krsna are accepted in the service of His devotees. The reason for the use of the word “almost” is that the devotees should be worshiped by offering them *krsna-prasada.* All other limbs such as offering obeisances remain the same.

The practitioner should hold festivals according to his capacity. Organizing festivals in the association of devotees is a prominent activity. However, one should be careful not to associate with nondevotees in the course of holding such festivals.

There is a need of organizing festivals on the occasion of the Lord's appearance day. One should maintain love and devotion while serving the Deity. Being attached to the impersonal aspect of the Lord, foolish people without proper consideration disrespect the Deity. But if they associate with devotees and properly consider, then they will see the need for serving the Deity.

One should relish devotional scriptures like *Srimad Bhagavatam* with advanced devotees. If one relishes devotional scriptures with rationalists, people fond of argument, and dry speculators, then one's heart becomes dry and the awakening of transcendental mellows does not take place.

It is necessary to associate with devotees. *Jnanis* and karmis are not counted amongst devotees due to their illicit desires. A practitioner of devotional service should associate with more advanced persons who are affectionate and on the same path. Otherwise his heart will not take shelter of pure devotional service. In the *Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya* (8.51) it is written:

yasya yat sangatih pumso manivat syat sa tad gunah svakularddhyai tato dhiman svayuthany eva samsrayet

“As the qualities of a nearby object are reflected in a crystal, one similarly takes on the qualities of a person with whom he associates. Therefore, in order to increase one's devotional sentiment in his own line, a wise person should take shelter of those who have the same temperament.” One should be particularly careful in this regard. Association with *sahajiyas* and *baulas* yields unfavorable results. But if one associates with pure Vaisnavas who are followers of Srila Rupa Gosvami, then pure love for Krsna is awakened. Among all limbs of devotional service, association with devotees is one of the main limbs.

Among all the above mentioned limbs of devotional service, the following five principle items are the best of all: worshiping the Deity, relishing the purport of *Srimad Bhagavatam* with advanced devotees, associating with more advanced devotees who are affectionate and in the same line, congregational chanting of the holy names, and residing in Mathura. If we further summarize, then chanting the holy names and serving the Vaisnavas are the topmost. It is written in the *Padma Purana:*

yena janma-sahasrani vasudevo nisevitah

tan mukhe hari-namani sada tisthanti bharata

“O descendant of Bharata! One who has worshiped the Deity of the Lord for thousands of lifetimes can always chant the holy name of Hari.” Also from the

nama cintamanih krsnas caitanya-rasa-vigrahah

purnah suddho nitya-mukto 'bhinnatvan nama-naminoh

atah srl-krsna-namadi na bhaved grahyam indriyaih sevonmukhe hi jihvadau svayam eva sphuraty adah

“The holy name of Krsna is transcendentally blissful. It bestows all spiritual benedictions, for it is Krsna Himself, the reservoir of all pleasure. Krsna's name is complete, and it is the form of all transcendental mellows. It is not a material name under any condition, and it is no less powerful than Krsna Himself. Since Krsna's name is not contaminated by the material qualities, there is no question of its being involved with *maya.* Krsna's name is always liberated and spiritual; it is never conditioned by the laws of material nature. This is because the name of Krsna and Krsna Himself are identical. Therefore material senses cannot appreciate Krsna's holy name, form, qualities, and pastimes. When a conditioned soul is awakened to Krsna consciousness and renders service by using his tongue to chant the Lord's holy name and taste the remnants of the Lord's food, the tongue is purified, and one gradually comes to understand who Krsna really is.” This is the independent mercy of the Absolute Truth.

Sri Mathura-mandala, the holy names of the Lord, devotional scriptures like *Sramad Bhagavatam,* pure devotees, and Deities—these five items are transcendental. By associating with them, a devotee quickly attains *bhava,* transcendental emotions, and Krsna.

In the process of *sadhana-bhakti,* these types of *vaidhi-bhakti* are explained. Again, *raganuga-sadhana-bhakti* is very powerful in the process of *sadhana.* When one practices devotional service by following the footsteps of the residents of Vrndavana, that is called *raganuga-bhakti.* Persons who are endeavoring for devotional service should follow the activities of the Vrajavasis with their body, mind, and speech. According to his qualification, a practitioner should engage in whatever activities are mentioned in either the process of *vaidhi-sadhana-bhakti* or *raganuga-sadhana-bhakti*.

Someone may attain the highest result by practicing one of the limbs, and someone may attain the highest result by practicing several limbs. The unalloyed devotion of those who have exclusively taken shelter of the service of the holy names and the Vaisnavas does not find taste in other limbs. Therefore the practitioner should work in devotion with full surrender, enthusiasm, firm confidence, and patience.

Sanga-tyaga Giving up the association of nondevotees

In his *Sri Upadesamrta*, Srila Rupa Gosvami has said that one's devotion is enhanced by *utsaha*, *niscaya*, *dhairya*, *tat-tat-karma-pravartana*, *sanga-tyaga*, and *sad-vrtti* (the devotee's lifestyle or propensities). Out of these items, *utsaha*, *niscaya*, *dhairya*, and *tat-tat-karma-pravartana* have already been separately discussed in the previous essays. Now I will try to discuss the meaning of the word *sanga-tyaga*.

There are two types of *sanga*—association and attachment. Association is of two

types—with nondevotees and with women. Similarly, attachment is also of two types—attachment for prejudices and attachment for assets. Those mahatmas who wish to attain perfection in devotional service should carefully give up *sanga* in the form of association and attachment. Otherwise this *sanga* will gradually and surely ruin everything. As stated in the *Bhagavad-gita* (2.62-63):

sangat sanjayate kamah   kamat krodho 'bhijayate

krodhad bhavati sammohah   sammohat smrti-vibhramah

smrti-bhramsad buddhi-naso buddhi-nasat pranasyati

“From attachment lust develops, and from lust anger arises. From anger, complete delusion arises, and from delusion bewilderment of memory. When memory is bewildered, intelligence is lost, and when intelligence is lost one falls down again into the material pool.” A practitioner should always remember this instruction of the Lord. If a practitioner engages in prohibited association, then gradually his attachment increases. The more this attachment increases, the more his firm faith in the supreme goal diminishes. The purport is that the living entity is spiritual; being conditioned by *maya* and falsely proud due to ignorance, the living entity has forgotten his constitutional position. In his pure state the living entity does not associate with *maya*, rather he remains fully spiritual. In the spiritual world all the association of the living entity is spiritual, therefore the eternal *sanga* of the living entities in that state is desirable. The *sanga* in the conditioned state of a living entity is polluted. That *sanga*, being polluted with nescience in the form of association with nondevotees and women and attachment for family and assets, is unfavorable for one's advancement. Spiritual

sanga of the living entities is compatible, and mundane *sanga* is incompatible. To get free from this incompatible *sanga* is the living entity's liberation. Now we will be considering incompatible *sanga.*

First we will consider the association of nondevotees. Who is a nondevotee? Those who are not subordinate to the Lord are called nondevotees. The *jnanis* are never subordinate to the Lord. They think that they can become one with the Lord on the strength of their knowledge. They think, *"Jnana* is the topmost object; the Lord cannot keep one who attains *jnana* under His control; the Lord became Supreme by the strength of this *jnana*, and I too will become Supreme." Therefore all the endeavors of the *jnanis* are to become independent of the Lord. The Lord's power does not act on one who achieves liberation in the form of merging with the Lord, which is attained by *jnana.* This is the attempt of the *jnanis*! The *jnanis* and mundane scholars do not depend on the mercy of the Lord. They try to achieve everything on the strength of their knowledge and reasoning, they do not care for the Lord's mercy. Therefore *jnanis* are nondevotees. Although some *jnanis* accept devotional service as their process of *sadhana*, at the time of perfection they discard it. In all their activities there are no symptoms of eternal serving mood or subordination to the Lord. Such are the symptoms of the *jnanl-sampradaya,* or philosophical speculators. They only get a glimpse of real knowledge. That real knowledge is only a different aspect of pure devotional service. Only pure devotees, by the mercy of the Lord, can attain that. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu instructs Srila Sanatana Gosvami in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 22.29) as follows:

jnani jivan-mukta-dasa painu kari' mane vastutah buddhi suddha' nahe krsna-bhakti vine

"There are many philosophical speculators *[jnanis]* belonging to the Mayavada school who consider themselves liberated and call themselves Narayana. However, their intelligence is not purified unless they engage in Krsna's devotional service." Therefore those who are attached to philosophical speculation are counted amongst the nondevotees. There is a fruit called *mukti*, and that is the supreme goal of their *sadhana.* It is not the purpose of their life to attain the Lord's mercy through His service. People who have faith in fruitive rituals are not devotees. Therefore they are also nondevotees. If anyone performs karma in order to achieve the mercy of Krsna, then that karma is called *bhakti.* That karma which yields mundane results or mundane knowledge is adverse to the Lord. Karmis do not exclusively search for the mercy of Krsna. Although

they respect Krsna, their main purpose is to attain some kind of happiness. Karma is nothing but selfish activities, therefore karmis are also called nondevotees. Yogis sometimes search for liberation, the fruit of *jnana,* and sometimes they search for *vibhuti,* or opulence, the fruit of karma. Hence, they too are called nondevotees. Due to lack of full surrender, worshipers of the demigods are also called nondevotees. Those who are attached to discussing dry logic are also adverse to the Lord. And what to speak of those who conclude that the Lord is only a figment of the imagination. Those who are attached to sense gratification and thus have no opportunity to remember the Lord are also counted among the nondevotees. If one associates with these nondevotees, then in a very short time one's intelligence is polluted and one's heart is overcome by their propensities. If anyone desires to attain pure devotional service, then he should carefully give up the association of nondevotees.

Second is association of women. Association with women is detrimental. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 22.87) Sri Caitanya instructs Srila Sanatana Gosvami as follows:

asat-sanga-tyaga,—ei vaisnava-acara strl-sangl'—eka asadhu, k-snabhakta' ara

“A Vaisnava should always avoid the association of ordinary people. Common people are very much materially attached, especially to women. Vaisnavas should also avoid the company of those who are not devotees of Lord Krsna.”

There are two types of Vaisnavas—the householders and the renunciates. Renunciates are forbidden from speaking with any woman. By the instruction to give up the association with women, they have been forbidden from conversing with women. As stated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 2.120):

ksudra-jlva saba markata-vaimgya kariya indriya carana bule prakrti' sambhasiya

“There are many persons with little in their possession who accept the renounced order of life like monkeys. They go here and there engaging in sense gratification and speaking intimately with women.”

Regarding Vaisnavis, the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 12.42) says: *purvavat prabhu kaila sabara milana*

stri-saba dura ha-ite kaila prabhura darasana

“Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu received them all, just as He had in previous years. The women, however, saw the Lord from a distance.” This is the prescription in regard to householder Vaisnavas. Householders should not associate with others' wives or prostitutes. They should not indulge in any association other than with their own wives according to religious scriptures. One should give up the uxorious mentality of being excessively fond of one's wife. The instructions of the scriptures regarding the *smartas* are given in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Adi* 15.27) as follows:

na grham grham ity ahur grhinl grham ucyate

taya hi sahitah sarvan purusarthan samasnute

“Merely a house is not a home, for it is a wife who gives a home its meaning. If one lives at home with his wife, together they can fulfill all the interests of human life.” There are four kinds of human interests for people in general—religiousity, economic development, sense gratification, and liberation. The prescriptions of the scriptures regarding *varna* and *asrama* are called religion. Whatever is prohibited in the scriptures is called irreligion. With the help of his wife, a householder should follow whatever is prescribed and give up whatever is prohibited. Whatever is achieved by following religious principles is called *artha*, or economic development. Assets like house, sons, daughters, cows, and animals are all *artha.* For enjoying those objects there is *kama. Dharma, artha,* and *kama*—these three are called *trivarga,* the pursuits of human life. Practicing these three *vargas* is the life of a conditioned living entity who is wandering in the cycle of fruitive activities. It is the duty of the *smarta* householder to practice *trivarga* with one's wife. A householder should practice *trivarga* with his wife day and night. The wife can accompany one while visiting holy places. Until one endeavors for the supreme goal of life, what else is there except pursuing *trivarga?* Liberation is the living entities' fourth human interest. There are two types of liberation—relief from extreme distress and attaining spiritual happiness. For those whose religious lives are regulated by dry knowledge or impersonalism, relief from extreme distress is the prime goal. But those whose hearts are filled with pure knowledge ultimately search for transcendental happiness and do not remain bound in simply gaining relief from extreme distress. A Vaisnava, whether a hpouseholder or a renunciate, is desirous of transcendental happiness. A householder Vaisnava always works together with

his wife for the purpose of achieving transcendental happiness. Although engaged in all kinds of work in this way, he never becomes uxorious. In this way he remains free from women's association throughout his life. He totally gives up illicit intimate speaking with women and the mundane uxorious mood in licit association with his wife. In the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (1.2.910, 13-14), Suta Gosvami has briefly explained the rules for a *grhastha* Vaisnava as follows:

dharmasya hy apavargyasya nartho 'rthayopakalpate

narthasya dharmaikantasya kamo labhaya hi smrtah

“All occupational engagements are certainly meant for ultimate liberation. They should never be performed for material gain. Furthermore, according to sages, one who is engaged in the ultimate occupational service should never use material gain to cultivate sense gratification.

kamasya nendriya-pritir labho jiveta yavata jlvasya tattva-jijnasa nartho yas ceha karmabhih

“Life's desires should never be directed toward sense gratification. One should desire only a healthy life, or self-preservation, since a human being is meant for inquiry about the Absolute Truth. Nothing else should be the goal of one's works.

atah pumbhir dvija-srestha varnasrama-vibhagasah svanusthitasya dharmasya samsiddhir hari-tosanam

“O best among the twice-born, it is therefore concluded that the highest perfection one can achieve by discharging the duties prescribed for one's own occupation according to caste divisions and orders of life is to please the Personality of Godhead.

tasmad ekena manasa bhagavan satvatam patih srotavyah kirtitavyas ca dhyeyah pujyas ca nityada

“Therefore, with one-pointed attention, one should constantly hear about, glorify, remember and worship the Personality of Godhead, who is the protector of the devotees.” The purport is that in twenty religious scriptures there are mainly instructions about *trivarga*. For the welfare of the karmis, the merciful sages have composed twenty religious scriptures that are suitable for karmis. In

the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.20.9) it is said:

tavat karmani kurvita na nirvidyeta yavata mat-katha-sravanadau va sraddha yavan na jayate

“As long as one is not satiated by fruitive activity and has not awakened his taste for devotional service by *sravanam kirtanam visnoh*, one has to act according to the regulative principles of the Vedic injunctions.” For the karmis mentioned by the Lord in this verse, *trivarga* is the only prescribed occupation. Those who have become indifferent and attained *jnana*, for them there is no longer a need for *trivarga* activities. They give up those activities and become eligible for *sannyasa* with dry knowledge. Those who are faithful in hearing the topics of the Lord after receiving His mercy on the strength of their accumulated pious activities from many lifetimes are no longer attached to karma. They are called Vaisnavas. Among them, those who are *g-hasthas* enjoy whatever *artha* they obtain while practicing *dharma* for the purpose of liberation, not for the purpose of sense gratification; rather, this *artha* helps them purely maintain their lives in the favorable cultivation of Krsna consciousness with the purpose of understanding the Absolute Truth. In this, the difference between karma and spiritual activities can be seen. Therefore, to attain the mercy of the Lord, a grhastha Vaisnava should accept the divisions of *varnasrama* and along with his wife practice *dharma, artha,* kama, and *moksa* in order to maintain his life. Whenever his house becomes unfavorable for this purpose, he should give it up out of disgust. Thus by properly performing the activities of *trivarga,* the *g-hastha* Vaisnava's character becomes pure. With such pure characteristics, he should hear, chant, and remember the names, forms, qualities, and pastimes of the Lord with full surrender. The wife should also always endeavor for spiritual perfection with the help of subordinate women such as her sister and daughter. There is no illicit conduct in this, so there will not be any association with women. Therefore, whether one is a householder or a renunciate—all practitioners should totally give up the association with women. The devotees should careAully give 29 the a6ove mentioned *sanga* in the Aorm of association.

Now let us consider *sanga* in the Aorm of attachment. Attachments are of two kinds—attachment For prejudices and attachment For assets. First I will discuss the attachment For prejudices. There are two types of prejudice—ancient and current. The conditioned living entity has 6een perAorming Aruitive activities and endeavoring For knowledge since time immemorial, and the prejudices that have developed in his su6tle 6ody as a result are called ancient prejudices.

Those prejudices are known as one's nature. As stated in the *Bhagavad-gita* (5.14):

na kartrtvam na karmani lokasya srjati prabhuh na karma-phala-samyogam svabhavas tu pravartate

“The em6odied spirit, master of the city of his 6ody, does not create activities, nor does he induce people to act, nor does he create the Aruits of action. All this is enacted 6y the modes of material nature.” Srila Baladeva Vidya6husana comments: *anadi pravrtta pradhana vasanatra svabhava sabdenokta-pradhanika dehadiman jlvah karayita kartta ceti na viviktasya tattvam iti*—“The primordial material desire that is active since time immemorial is called one's nature. Due to such a desire the living entity is supplied with material 6odies and other paraphenelia. False identiAication with the 6odies causes one to act and causes others to act, although this is not the pure soul's real constitution or nature.”

Again Arom the *Bhagavad-gita* (18.60):

svabhava-jena kaunteya nibaddhah svena karmana kartum necchasi yan mohat karisyasy avaso 'pi tat

“Under illusion you are now declining to act according to My direction. But, compelled 6y the work 6orn of your own nature, you will act all the same, O son of Kunti.”

Regarding the 6ondage of the prejudice of knowledge, the *Bhagavad-gita* (14.6) says:

tatra sattvam nirmalatvat   prakasakam anamayam

sukha-sangena badhnati   jnana-sangena canagha

“O sinless one, the mode of goodness, 6eing purer than the others, is illuminating, and it Arees one Arom all sinAul reactions. Those situated in that mode 6ecome conditioned 6y a sense of happiness and knowledge.” Srila Baladeva Vidya6husana comments: *'jnany aham,' sukhy aham' ity abhimanas tena purusam nibadhnati*—“'I am wise.' 'I am happy.' By this pride, the living entity is 6ound 6y goodness.” People's association with karma and *jnana* is the result of attachment 6orn Arom the prejudices of one's nature that are produced

Arom past karma and *jnana*. In the previous verse, the Mayavadi's 6ondage of *jnana* is displayed. Regarding the karmis, the *Bhagavad-gita* (3.26) says:

na buddhi-bhedam janayed ajnanam karma-sanginam

josayet sarva-karmani vidvan yuktah samacaran

“So as not to disrupt the minds of ignorant men attached to the Aruitive results of prescri6ed duties, a learned person should not induce them to stop work. Rather, 6y working in the spirit of devotion, he should engage them in all sorts of

activities [for the gradual development of Krsna consciousness].”

From ancient prejudices one develops association with karma and *jnana*. Association with these ancient prejudices is inevitable. Despite all attempts, up to suicide, one cannot give up one's prejudices.

The prejudices or attachments for good and bad attained in this life due to association are called modern prejudices. Everyone in the world is under the control of these two kinds of prejudices. When a living entity is not bound by *maya*, then by nature he is a servant of Krsna. Being bound by *maya,* a living entity cannot give up ancient and modern wicked prejudices. At that time ancient wicked prejudices become his second nature. Only *sadhu-sanga* can reform the attachment to prejudices. *Sadhu-sanga* is the only remedy for this disease. Unless one reforms his attachment to prejudices, one cannot attain perfection in devotional service by any means. As stated in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (3.23.55):

sango yah samsrter hetur asatsu vihito 'dhiya sa eva sadhusu krto nihsangatvaya kalpate

“Association for sense gratification is certainly the path of bondage. But the same type of association, performed with a saintly person, leads to the path of liberation, even if performed without knowledge.”

Due to association with materialistic people, the living entity is bound in the cycle of birth and death. Even if one unknowingly associates with a materialist, the result must come. And if one unknowingly associates with a real sadhu, he attains freedom from material association. Again in *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.12.1-2) it says:

no rodhayati mam yogo na sankhyam dharma eva ca na svadhyayas tapas tyago nesta-purtam na daksina vratani yajnas chandamsi tirthani niyama yamah yathavarundhe sat-sangah sarva-sangapaho hi mam

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, by associating with My pure devotees one can destroy one's attachment for all objects of material sense gratification. Such purifying association brings Me under the control of My devotee. One may perform the *astanga-yoga* system, engage in philosophical analysis of the elements of material nature, practice nonviolence and other ordinary principles of piety, chant the *Vedas*, perform penances, take to the renounced order of life, execute sacrificial performances and dig wells, plant trees and perform other public welfare activities, give in charity, carry out severe vows, worship the demigods, chant confidential mantras, visit holy places, or accept major and minor disciplinary injunctions, but even by performing such activities one does not bring Me under his control.”

Association with prejudices is very dangerous. By affectionately associating with pure devotees of the Lord, one's association with prejudices, in the form of karma and *jnana*, is destroyed. Due to this association with prejudices a living entity's propensity for ignorance and passion becomes stronger. Whatever propensities for goodness, passion, and ignorance are seen in people's eating, sleeping, and sensual activities are all due to association with prejudices. Karmis and *jnanis* disrespect Vaisnavas only due to their attachment for prejudices. Until one's attachment to prejudices is destroyed, the ten offenses in chanting will not be uprooted. Offenses

at the feet of sadhus is due to being proud of one's karma and *jnana*. The offense in chanting in the form of blaspheming devotees enters the heart of the nondevotee and takes up residence there. Worldly attachment is contrary to acceptance of Krsna's undisputed supremacy, and it therefore does not allow the unfortunate living entity to fully surrender to the Lord. Thus disobeying the spiritual master, blaspheming the Vedic literatures, interpreting the holy name, considering the chanting of the holy names as equal to the pious activities offered in the *Vedas*, committing sinful activities while pretending to chant the holy name, aversion due to conceptions of I and mine, selling the holy names to unfit persons—all these offenses against the holy names continue. In such a condition, how can one be benefitted? Therefore it is said:

asadbhih saha sangas tu na kartavyah kadacana yasmat sarvartha hanih syad

adhah patas ca jayate

“One should never associate with materialistic persons, for by doing so all one's assets are lost and he falls from his position.”

It has been seen that many fortunate souls have given up attachment for prejudices by the association of pure Vaisnavas. From the scriptures it is well known that by the association of Sri Narada Muni the hunter (Mrgari) and Ratnakara (Valmiki) attained auspiciousness. The foremost instruction of Sri Ramanujacarya is this: “If you cannot purify yourself by any endeavor whatsoever, then just go sit with the Vaisnavas and you will achieve all auspiciousness.” By observing the pure characteristics of a devotee, in a very short time a person's mind is changed, his attachment for sense enjoyment decreases, and the seedling of *bhakti* sprouts in the heart. One even gradually develops a taste for the Vaisnavas' food and behavior. We have seen how by associating with Vaisnavas, people have given up many *anarthas*—taste for associating with women, thirst for wealth, desire for sense enjoyment and liberation, inclination for karma and *jnana,* eating meat and fish, drinking wine, smoking tobacco, and the desire to chew pan. By observing a Vaisnava's quality of not uselessly wasting time, many people have easily given up *anarthas* such as laziness, oversleeping, useless talk, urge of speech, etc. We have also seen that by associating with Vaisnavas for some time someone's cheating propensity and desire for fame have been destroyed. We have seen with our own eyes that by associating with Vaisnavas with a little affection all other association, such as attachment for prejudices, has been vanquished. Those who are attached to winning fights, those who are expert at attaining dominion, those who are eager to accumulate great wealth—all such types of people have attained devotional service by being purified in the association of Vaisnavas. Even the hearts of persons who think, “I will defeat the world by my arguments and attain supremacy,” have been pacified. Without the association of Vaisnavas there is no alternative for rectifying the attachment for prejudices.

One should carefully give up attachment for material assets. People in general have spontaneous attachment for house, household paraphernalia, clothes, ornaments, wealth, wife and children's health, their own health, eatables, trees, and animals. Some people are so addicted to smoking, chewing pan, eating fish and meat, and drinking alcohol that their practice of spiritual life is obstructed. Many people do not respect the Lord's remnants out of great attachment to eating things like fish. Because of the desire to constantly smoke, many people's study

of devotional scriptures, relish for hearing and chanting, and remaining long in temples is obstructed. Attachment for these things is averse to the constant practice of devotional service. If one does not carefully give up these things then he cannot get happiness from his devotional service. Attachment for these things is easily destroyed by the association of devotees. Still, one should try to destroy these petty attachments by fully engaging in devotional service. By observing vows approved in devotional service, those attachments are vanquished.

By properly observing *hari-vasara*, Ekadast, and appearance days of the Lord, those attachments are vanquished. The rules of such vows are the provisions for diminishing one's attachments. There are prescriptions for practicing devotional service while giving up all types of enjoyment on those days. There are two types of eatables—those which sustain one's life and those which gratify the senses. Eating grains and drinking are life sustaining. Fish, meat, pan, intoxicants, and smoking are all for gratifying the senses. On days of vows, unless one totally gives up sense gratifying items, it is not a vow. As far as possible, life sustaining items should also be given up. According to the prescribed needs of one's bodily condition one must try as far as possible to reduce the acceptance of life sustaining eatables. There is no prescription for acceptance of sense gratifying items, the only prescription is to reject them. One of the limbs of a *vrata* is to diminish the devotee's propensity for enjoyment. If one thinks, “Today somehow or other I will renounce, but tomorrow I will enjoy profusely,” then the purpose of the vow will not be successful. The reason is that vows have been prescribed to give up the association of such items by gradual practice. Vows are usually for three days. First by practicing vows for three days, then by practicing for one month, then by practicing for four months (Caturmasya)—in this way gradually one should completely uproot the attachment for sense gratifying items and leave them forever. For those who cannot remember the statements of *Bhagavad-gita: ksipram bhavati dharmatma* —“He quickly becomes righteous,” in regard to the observance of vows, their renunciation is temporary like the bathing of an elephant.

For those who desire to attain pure devotional service, the association of nondevotees and women is meant to be given up. It is extremely necessary for them to associate with sadhus in order to give up the attachment for prejudices. They must follow all vows meant for Vaisnavas in order to give up the attachment for material objects. One should not be negligent in these practices. One should follow these instructions with great care and respect. If one does not follow carefully, then cheating in the form of duplicity renders the

whole endeavor useless. For those who do not have respect in this regard, attaining devotion to Sra Hari becomes very rare, even after hearing for many births.

What is association and giving up association? Many people have doubts about this. Doubts may be there, because if just by coming close to a materialist or material object is consider associating with them, then there is no way to give up this association. As long as the material body is there, how can one give up the proximity of these things? How can a *g-hastha* Vaisnava give up his family members? One cannot give up the association of deceitful persons, even if they are renunciates. One will have to come across materialists in one's life, whether one is a *g-hastha* or a renunciate. Therefore the limit for giving up the association of materialists is prescribed in *Sri Upadesam-ta* as follows:

dadati pratig-hnati guhyam akhyati p-cchati bhunkte bhojayate caiva sad-vidham priti-laksanam

“Offering gifts in charity, accepting charitable gifts, revealing one's mind in confidence, inquiring confidentially, accepting *prasada* and offering *prasada* are the six symptoms of love shared by one devotee and another.”

O *sadhakas!* One must accept proximity with both bad and good people as one passes his life. This equally applies to householders and renunciates. Proximity must be there, nevertheless one should not engage in bad association. Giving in charity, accepting charity, revealing one's mind, hearing one's mind, accepting foods, and giving foods—if done with love, these are called *sanga,* or association. Giving some foodstuffs to a hungry person and accepting some charity from a pious man is done out of duty, not out of love. Even if they are materialists, this type of engagement is not considered association. But if they are pure devotees, then such activities are performed out of love. When acts are performed out of love, then it is association. Therefore giving charity to pure Vaisnavas and accepting items or wealth from them becomes *sat-sanga.* Giving charity to a materialist or accepting charity from one, if done out of love, becomes *asat-sanga.* When a materialist approaches you, whatever is required to be done should be done only out of duty. One should not speak confidentially with a materialist. Generally there is some love involved in confidential speaking, therefore it is association. While meeting a materialistic friend, one should speak only what is extremely necessary. At that time it is better not to exhibit heartfelt love. But if that friend is a proper Vaisnava, then one should

accept his association by speaking to him with love. This type of behavior with relatives and friends creates no hostility. There is no association in ordinary talk. One should behave with ordinary people as one externally behaves with a stranger while buying something in the market. The same dealings with a pure devotee of the Lord should be done out of love. If one is obliged to feed hungry people, needy people, and teachers, he should do so as a host dutifully cares for his guest, there is no need to exhibit love. Care for them, but not out of love. One should feed pure Vaisnavas with love, and when required accept the remnants given by them with love. If one can behave in this way while giving in charity, accepting charity, speaking confidentially, hearing confidentially, feeding, and accepting food with one's wife, children, servants, maidservants, strangers, and whoever else one meets, there will no unholy association, only good association. There is no hope of achieving devotion to Krsna until one gives up unholy association in this way. A renunciate Vaisnava should accept whatever alms he receives by *madhukarl,* or begging, at the house of a honest householder with the above mentioned consideration. He should always remember the difference between gross begging and *madhukarl.* A *g-hastha* Vaisnava should accept *prasada*—grains and drinks—in the house of another *g-hastha* who has pure character. One should always be cautious about taking *prasada* in the house of a nondevotee and one with bad character. There is no need to speak further about this. Due to their pious activities, those who have developed faith in devotional service have a little intelligence by the mercy of Krsna. Due to that intelligence they can easily understand the essence of the *acaryas'* instructions. Therefore only a few words are needed to instruct them. Those who have no pious credits have no faith. Even if they are given volumes of instruction, they will not understand a thing. Therefore Srila Rupa Gosvamt has given only a few words of instruction in *Sri Upadesamrta.*

Sadhu-vrtti Following in the footsteps of the previous acaryas

I have already written separate essays regarding *utsaha, niscaya, dhairya, tat-tat-karma-pravartana,* and *sanga-tyaga.* Now I am writing this essay on *sadhu-vrtti.* There are two kinds of sadhus—householders and renunciates. I will separately describe the *vrtti,* or occupation, of each. Although householders and renunciates have different occupations, there are some they have in common. These will be discussed separately. There are two meanings of the word occupation—propensity and lifestyle. Propensity means one's nature, or *svabhava.* Those natural propensities are the living entity's *dharma.* It is said in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (7.11.31):

prayah sva-bhava-vihito nrnam dharmo yuge yuge veda-drgbhih smrto rajan pretya ceha ca sarma-krt

“My dear King, *brahmanas* well conversant in Vedic knowledge have given their verdict that in every age [yuga] the conduct of different sections of people according to their material modes of nature is auspicious both in this life and after death.”

By passing life in one's natural occupation, one can attain devotional service free from the modes of nature. Otherwise one will fall into irreligion and be unable to make gradual advancement. It is said in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (7.11.32):

vrttya sva-bhava-krtaya vartamanah sva-karma-krt hitva sva-bhava-jam karma sanair nirgunatam iyat

“If one acts in his profession according to his position in the modes of nature and gradually gives up these activities, he attains the transcendental position.” *Nirgunata,* or the transcendental position, means devotion to Krsna. As stated in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.25.33):

tasmad deham imam labdhva jnana-vijnana-sambhavam guna-sangam vinirdhuya mam bhajantu vicaksanah

“Therefore, having achieved this human form of life, which allows one to develop full knowledge, those who are intelligent should free themselves from all contamination of the modes of nature and engage exclusively in My loving service.” It has been ascertained by the Lord's use of the two words *nirgunam* and

mad upasrayam.3 that whatever is performed out of devotion is called *nirguna*, or transcendental. The *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.25.34-35) states:

rajas tamas cabhijayet sattva-samsevaya munih sattvam cabhijayed yukto nairapeksyena santa-dhlh

“He should conquer the modes of passion and ignorance by engaging himself only with things in the mode of goodness. Then, being fixed in devotional service, the sage should also conquer the material mode of goodness by indifference toward the modes.” Therefore people can become free from the

modes of nature if they pass their lives dovetailing everything—*sattvika* objects, activities, time, and place—with the devotional service of the Lord. Only human beings are eligible for propensities in the mode of goodness, and remaining in that state they gradually become free from the modes. The general propensities of human beings in the mode of goodness are described in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (7.11.8-12) as follows: *satya*—speaking the truth without distortion or deviation; *daya*—sympathy to everyone suffering; *tapah*—austerities (such as observing fasts at least twice in a month on the day of Ekadast); *sauca*—cleanliness (bathing regularly at least twice a day—morning and evening—and remembering to chant the holy name of God); *titiksa*—toleration (being unagitated by seasonal changes or inconvenient circumstances); *iksa*—distinguishing between good and bad; *sama*—control of the mind (not allowing the mind to act whimsically); *dama*—control of the senses (not allowing the senses to act without control); *ahimsa*—nonviolence (not subjecting any living entity to the threefold miseries); *brahmacarya*—continence or abstaining from misuse of one's semen (not indulging in sex with women other than one's own wife and not having sex with one's own wife when sex is forbidden, like during the period of menstruation); *tyaga*—giving in charity at least fifty percent of one's income; *svadhyaya*—reading of transcendental literatures like *Bhagavad-gita, Srimad Bhagavatam, Ramayana* and *Mahabharata; saralata*—simplicity (freedom from mental duplicity); *santosa*—being satisfied with that which is available without severe endeavor; *samadarsi-janera-seva*—rendering service to saintly persons who make no distinctions between one living being and another and who see every living being as a spirit soul; *gramya-cesta haite niv-tti*—not taking part in so-called philanthropic activities; *viparyayeheksa*—distinguishing unnecessary activities; *v-thalapa-niv-tti (maunam*)—being grave and silent; *atma-vimarsana*— research into the self (as to whether one is the body or the soul); *annadira-vibhaga*—equal distribution of food and drink; *sakala-loke bhagavat-sambandha-buddhi*—accepting all living entities as related to the Lord; as well as *sravana*—hearing; *klrtana*—chanting; *smarana*—remembering (His words and activities); *seva*—service; *ijya*—worship; *nati*—offering obeisances; *dasya*— accepting the service; *sakhyam*—to consider as a friend; *atma-nivedana*— surrendering one's whole self. According to the differentiations of these thirty characteristics, the four *varnas—brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya,* and *sudra*—and the four *asramas—brahmacarl, g-hastha, vanaprastha,* and *sannyasa*—are born. In the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.18.42) it is said:

bhiksor dharmah samo 'himsa tapa iksa vanaukasah g-hino bhuta-raksejya

dvijasyacarya-sevanam

“The main religious duties of a *sannyasi* are equanimity and nonviolence, whereas for the *vanaprastha* austerity and philosophical understanding of the difference between the body and soul are prominent. The main duties of a householder are to give shelter to all living entities and perform sacrifice, and the *brahmacarl* is mainly engaged in serving the spiritual master.” The life occupations of the four *varnas* are stated as follows: Study, teaching, worship, teaching worship, giving charity, and accepting charity—these six are the *brahmanas'* occupations; out of these they should maintain their life by teaching, teaching worship, and accepting worship. The *ksatriyas'* occupations are protecting the *praja* by punishing miscreants and maintaining the life by taxation. Farming, protecting cows, and business are the *vaisyas'* occupations; only serving *brahmanas* is the livelihood of the *sudras.* The traditional occupation of those who are lower than *sudras* are their means of livelihood.

From all these conclusions of *Srimad Bhagavatam* it should be understood that performing devotional service to Sri Hari is the only purpose of life, there is no other purpose. Unless one makes the gross and subtle bodies favorable for devotional service, one cannot engage in such. There is a need for some arrangements in order to attain a favorable condition in those two bodies. First in order to maintain the gross body there is a need to accumulate a house, household items, grains, and drinks. For the prosperity of the subtle body one needs proper knowledge and a proper occupation. In order to make the bodies completely favorable for devotional service, there is a need to situate them above the modes of nature. Due to the results of fruitive activities from time immemorial, whatever nature and desires a living entity develops is certainly a mixture of goodness, passion, and ignorance. By first enriching the mode of goodness, one should diminish and defeat passion and ignorance and make goodness prominent. When the mode of goodness is completely under the control of devotional service, then it becomes *nirguna.* By following this gradual process one's body, mind, and environment become fit for devotional service.

There is a need for *varnasrama-dharma* while a human remains in the stage of piety and impiety that are born of his nature. The main purpose of *varnasrama-dharma* is this: By gradually following *varnasrama-dharma* a human being will become eligible to perform devotional service. Sriman Mahaprabhu has quoted the following verses from *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.5.2-3) to Sanatana Gosvami:

mukha-bahuru-padebhyah purusasyasramaih saha catvaro jajnire varna gunair vipradayah prthak

ya esam purusam saksad- atma-prabhavam Isvaram na bhajanty avajananti sthanad bhrastah patanty adhah

“'From the mouth of Brahma, the brahminical order has come into existence. Similarly, from his arms the *ksatriyas* have come, from his waist the *vaisyas* have come, and from his legs the *sudras* have come. These four orders and their spiritual counterparts *[brahmacarya, grhastha, vanaprastha,* and sannyasa] combine to make human society complete. If one simply maintains an official position in the four *varnas* and *asramas* but does not worship the Supreme Lord Visnu, he falls down from his puffed-up position into a hellish condition.” Srila Ramananda Raya said that the process for achieving the supreme goal of life is given in the *Visnu Purana* as follows:

varnasramacaravata purusena parah puman

visnur aradhyate pantha nanyat tat-tosa-karanam

“One can worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Visnu, by proper discharge of the principles of *varna* and *asrama.* There is no alternative to pacifying the Lord by execution of the principles of the *varnasrama* system.” Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, however, rejected this process as external and requested him to give a higher conclusion. The purport of Sri Caitanya's statement is this: “O Ramananda! *Varnasrama-dharma* is meant to regulate the gross and subtle bodies. If someone is satisfied only in that, without engaging in devotional service of Krsna, then what is his gain? Therefore, although the process of *varnasrama* is the only means of purification for a conditioned soul, still it is external.” As stated in *Srimad Bhagavatam* (1.2.8):

dharmah svanusthitah pumsam visvaksena-kathasu yah notpadayed yadi ratim srama eva hi kevalam

“The occupational activities a man performs according to his own position are only so much useless labor if they do not provoke attraction for the message of the Personality of Godhead.” From this one should not conclude that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has ordered us to discard *varnasrama-dharma.* If that would have been the case, then He would not have instructed all living entities through His pastimes of completely following the orders of *grhastha* and

sannyasa. As long as one has a material body the system of *varnasrama-dharma* must be followed, but it should remain under the full control and domination of *bhakti. Varnasrama-dharma* is like the foundation of one's supreme occupational duty. When one's supreme occupational duty is matured and one achieves his goal, then the process is gradually neglected. Again, it is also abandoned at the time of death.

In the last half of the verse quoted by Srila Ramananda Raya, it says: *visnur aradhyate pantha nanyat tat-tosa-karanam*—"One should know that without following the process of *varnasrama-dharma*, a materialist has no alternative to pass his life favorably for the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Visnu." This is the only way to achieve the life of a devotee.

Human beings are divided according to their nature into the following divisions: *brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, sudra, sankara,* and *antyaja.* Even though the system of *varnasrama* is not clearly present in some countries, still it exists in a seedling form. According to one's nature, he develops his occupation and, accordingly, his means of livelihood. By accepting the livelihood and occupation of others, one meets with misfortune. What to speak of misfortune, it especially obstructs one's devotional service. Birth is not the only criteria; the only criteria is one's nature. In the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (7.11.35) it is stated:

yasya yal laksanam proktam pumso varnabhivyanjakam yad anyatrapi drsyeta tat tenaiva vinirdiset

"If one shows the symptoms of being a *brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya,* or *sudra,* as described above, even if he has appeared in a different class, he should be accepted according to those symptoms of classification." In his commentary, Sridhara Swami has written: *samadibhir eva brahmanadi vyavaharo mukhyah, na jati matrad ity aha—yasyeti. yad yadi anyatra varnantare 'pi drsyeta tad varnantaram tenaiva laksana nimittenaiva varnena vinirddiset, na tu jati nimittenety arthah*—"The *brahmanas'* main characteristics are qualities such as peacefulness, not birth. If these main characteristics are seen in persons other than those born as *brahmanas,* then such persons should be considered *brahmanas.* They should not be considered according to their caste by birth." This kind of eternal *varnasrama-dharma* is always to be followed. It is often useful for devotional service. Members of the four *varnas* and the lower castes should be eager to progress their *sattvic* nature. If an outcaste becomes fortunate due to his pious deeds, then he should progress his cultivation of goodness while

following the conduct of a *sudra.* Everyone should give prominence to devotional service and progress the cultivation of goodness to the platform of *nirguna,* transcendence, by the mercy of the devotees. These are the stages of *sanatana-dharma.* With devotion, the member of any *varna* is considered the best of the *brahmanas;* without devotion, the life of a *brahmana* fixed in goodness is useless.

For example, let us consider the statement: Some mahatma has said (Srila Narottama dasa Thakura from *Prema-bhakti-candrika*): *mahajanera yei patha, ta 'te ha 'ba anurata, purvapara kariya vicara*—"I will be attached to the path chalked out by the previous and later *mahajanas."* The *rsis* and mahatmas who have taught conduct before the appearance of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu are counted among the previous *mahajanas.* The conduct seen in the *mahajanas* after the appearance of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is the conduct of later *mahajanas.* The conduct of the later *mahajanas* is superior and should be adopted. The conduct of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His followers is meant to teach people, so that conduct should be followed in all respects.

What is proper occupation? To know this, one should see the behavior of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's followers. As far as possible I will try to briefly compile them in this essay. First I will write about the behavior and occupation of the *grhastha,* as found in the character of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His devotees. As a support for his devotional service, a householder should find a suitable wife. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Adi* 15.26-27) the Lord says:

grhastha ha-ilama, ebe cahi grha-dharma grhinl vina grha-dharma na haya sobhana

"Since I am remaining at home it is My duty to act as a *grhastha.* Without a wife, there is no meaning to householder life."

While living with one's wife and maintaining religious family life, Krsna's servants and maidservants are born in the form of sons and daughters. Nourishing them is called maintaining the family. The pious acquisition of wealth is required in these activities. In this regard Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has said in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Antya* 5.41) and *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 15.96):

prabhu bale,—parivara aneka tomara nirvaha kemate tabe haibe sabara?

grhastha' hayena inho, cahiye sancaya sancaya na kaile kutumba-bharana nahi haya

“The Lord said: There are so many members in your family. How will you maintain everyone? Being a householder, one needs to save some money. Because he is not doing so, it is very difficult for him to maintain his family.”

One must be educated at a proper age. But he should not study atheistic literatures. In the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Adi* 12.49 and *Madhya* 9.241-242) the Lord says:

pade kene loka?—krsna bhakti janibare se yadi nahila, tabe vidyaya ki kare?

visaya-madandha saba kichui na jane vidya-made, dhana-made vaisnava na cine

bhagavata padiyao ka 'ro buddhi nasa

“Why do people study? Education is only for understanding devotional service of Lord Krsna. If you miss this point, then what is the use of your education? Everyone is blinded by pride and sense gratification. Being proud of their education and wealth, they fail to recognize a Vaisnava. If one studies *Srimad Bhagavatam* improperly his intelligence is polluted.”

Serving guests is the principle duty of a *grhastha*—this is the Lord's instruction. In the *Caitanya-bhagavata* (*Adi* 14.21, 26) it is stated:

grhasthere mahaprabhu sikhayena dharma atithira seva—grhasthera mula-karma

akaitave citta-sukhe ya 'ra yena sakti taha karilei bali atithite bhakti

“In this way the Lord satisfied all His guests and taught the world how to behave as a perfect householder. The foremost duty of a householder is to serve his guests. If a householder happily serves his guests without duplicity and according to his ability he is considered hospitable.”

A *grhastha* should act with simplicity in his dealings with people; he should not allow any kind of cheating or duplicity in his heart. In the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Adi* 14.142) the Lord says:

ataeva grhe tumi krsna bhaja giya kutlnat! parihari' ekanta haiya

“Therefore go back to your home and worship Lord Krsna with full attention, giving up all duplicity.”

It is the principle duty of a *grhastha* to serve senior persons. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Adi* 15.21) the Lord says:

grhastha ha-iya kariba pita-matara sevana ihate-i tusta habena laksml-narayana

“Later I shall become a householder and thus serve My parents, for this action will very much satisfy Lord Narayana and His wife, the goddess of fortune.”

A householder should take the principles of renunciation to heart; but he should not simply dress as a renunciate. As stated by the Lord in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 16.237-239):

sthira hana ghare yao, na hao vatula krame krame paya loka bhava-sindhu-kula

markata-vairagya na kara loka dekhana yatha-yogya visaya bhunja' anasakta hana

antare nistha kara, bahye loka-vyavahara acirat krsna tomaya karibe uddhara

“Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said: Be patient and return home. Don't be a crazy fellow. By and by you will be able to cross the ocean of material existence. You should not make yourself a showbottle devotee and become a false renunciate. For the time being, enjoy the material world in a befitting way and do not become attached to it. Within your heart, you should keep yourself very faithful, but externally you may behave like an ordinary man. Thus Krsna will soon be very pleased and deliver you from the clutches of *maya.”*

A householder is duty-bound to work for the benefit of everyone. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Adi* 9.41, 7.92) the Lord said:

bharata-bhumite haila manusya-janma yarn janma sarthaka kari' kara para-upakara

naca, gao, bhakta-sange kara sanklrtana krsna-nama upadesi' tara' sarva-jana

“One who has taken his birth as a human being in the land of India (Bharata-varsa) should make his life successful and work for the benefit of all other people. My dear child, continue dancing, chanting, and performing *sanklrtana* in association with devotees. Furthermore, go out and preach the value of chanting *krsna-nama,* for by this process You will be able to deliver all fallen souls.”

In this practice of devotional service, duplicitous association has been prohibited. Even in street *sanklrtana* one should chant and dance in the association of pure devotees. One should not chant in the association of nondevotees.

A householder should fully depend on the will of the Lord in all his activities. The Lord says in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya* 28.55):

suna mata, Isvarera adhlna samsara svatantra haite sakti nahika kahara

“Listen, dear mother, the whole world is under the control of the Lord. No one has the power to become independent.”

A householder should cautiously give up the association of nondevotees, women, and uxorious people. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 22.87) the Lord said:

asat-sanga-tyaga,—ei vaisnava-acara strl-sangl'—eka asadhu, 'krsnabhakta' ara

“A Vaisnava should always avoid the association of ordinary people. Common people are very much materially attached, especially to women. Vaisnavas should also avoid the company of those who are not devotees of Lord Krsna.”

By following his prescribed duties a *grhastha* Vaisnava should accumulate wealth for his maintenance. He should not accumulate wealth by sinful means. Lord Nityananda Prabhu has stated in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Antya* 5.685-688):

suna dvija, yateka pataka kaili tui ara yadi na karis, saba nimu muni

parahimsa, daka, curi—saba anacara chada giya, iha tumi na kariha ara

dharma pathe giya tumi laha hari-nama tabe tumi anyere kariba paritrana

yata saba dasyu, cora dakiya aniya dharma-pathe sabare laoyao tumi giya

“Now listen carefully, O *brahmana.* I will take responsibility for all your previous misdeeds if you do not repeat them. No more aggression, violence, looting, or murder; give them up forever. Lead a religious life and chant the holy names of the Supreme Lord. Then later you can also save others. Go and meet other dacoits and murderers and bring them to the path of pure religious life.”

A householder should not hanker for another's wife or prostitutes. This is exhibited in the Lord's dealings with Krsnadasa in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 9.227-228):

gosanira sange rahe krsnadasa brahmana bhattathari-saha tahan haila darasana

strl-dhana dekhana tanra lobha janmaila arya sarala viprera buddhi-nasa kaila

“Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was accompanied by His servant, Krsnadasa. He was a *brahmana*, but he met with the Bhattatharis there. With women the Bhattatharis allured the *brahmana* Krsnadasa, who was simple and gentle. By virtue of their bad association, they polluted his intelligence.”

The Lord protected that *brahmana* from the women's clutches by pulling him by the hair. The words *sarala vipra* mean a weak-hearted young *brahmana.*

He is a real householder who chants one hundred thousand names every day. Pure devotees should accept *prasada* in the houses of such *grhasthas.* In the *Caitanya-bhagavata* (9.121-2) the Lord said:

prabhu bale,—jana, laksesvara' bali kare? prati-dina laksa-nama ye grahana kare

se janera nama ami bali laksesvara' tatha bhiksa amara, na yai anya ghara

“The Lord replied: Do you know who is a *laksesvara?* He is someone who chants one *laksa*, or one hundred thousand, holy names everyday. I call such a person a *laksesvara.* I only take meals in that person's house, no one else.”

There is no difference between *smartas* and Vaisnavas regarding following the codes of religion. The Lord has said in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Antya* 9.388-9):

adhama janera ye acara, yena dharma adhikari vaisnaveo kare sei karma

krsna krpaye se iha janibare pare e saba sankate keha mare, keha tare

“Sometimes an exalted Vaisnava exhibits the same activities as a materialistic person. One can understand this by the mercy of Krsna; otherwise in this dilemma one may be liberated or destroyed.”

The purport is that the conviction in the heart of a Vaisnava is independent. If one is a Vaisnava, then he can understand the conviction in the heart of another Vaisnava who is engaged in the same activities as those of the *smartas.* One who cannot understand this cannot respect Vaisnavas, and he thereby goes to hell.

The Lord has explained the duties of householders in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 15.104):

prabhu kahena—krsna-seva', vaisnava-sevana' nirantara kara krsna-nama-sanklrtana'

“Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu replied: Without cessation continue chanting the holy name of Lord Krsna. Whenever possible, serve Him and His devotees, the Vaisnavas.”

It is the duty of a *grhastha* to constantly chant the holy names of the Lord and serve the Vaisnavas and the Lord with the help of his relatives and by the wealth he has earned through his pious life. Regarding serving the Vaisnavas, one should know that there are three types of nonduplicitous devotees. Serving such Vaisnavas is called *vaisnava-seva.* There is no need to gather many Vaisnavas by invitation. Whenever a Vaisnava comes for any purpose he should be properly served with care. By gathering many Vaisnavas, one may commit offenses. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 15.198):

bahuta sannyasa yadi aise eka thani sammana karite nan, aparadha pai

“If all the *sannyasls* come together, it would not be possible for me to pay them proper respects. Therefore I would be an offender.”

It is the duty of a *grhastha* Vaisnava to show mercy on the poor and fallen. As stated in *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 3.238):

dane daya kare,—ei sadhu-svabhava haya

“It is a characteristic of all saintly persons to be kind toward the poor and fallen.” A *grhastha* Vaisnava should not desire to give up his body merely out of some sentiment or anger. As stated by the Lord in *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 4.57):

deha-tyagadi yata, saba—tamo-dharma tamo-rajo-dharme krsnera na paiye marma

“Acts such as suicide are influenced by the mode of ignorance, and in ignorance and passion one cannot understand who Krsna is.”

There is no consideration of superior or inferior status due to social position in regard to worshiping Krsna. In worldly occupations there are different activities according to the different social divisions, which are due to superior and inferior grades of intelligence. There are no such distinctions in the process of devotional service. As confirmed by the Lord in *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 4.66-67):

nlca-jati nahe krsna-bhajane ayogya sat-kula-vipra nahe bhajanera yogya

yei bhaje sei bada, abhakta—hina, chara krsna-bhajane nahi jati-kuladi-vicara

“A person born in a low family is not unfit for discharging devotional service to Lord Krsna, nor is one fit for devotional service simply because he is born in an aristocratic family of *brahmanas.* Anyone who takes to devotional service is exalted, whereas a nondevotee is always condemned and abominable. Therefore in the discharge of devotional service to the Lord, there is no consideration of the status of one's family.”

Also in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 5.84) it is said:

sannyasa pandita-ganera karite garva nasa naca-sudra-dvara karena dharmera prakasa

“To vanquish the false pride of so-called renunciates and learned scholars, He spreads real religious principles, even through a *sudra,* or lowborn fourth-class man.”

A *grhastha* Vaisnava should feel satisfied with whatever food and clothing he gets without difficulty. As stated in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Antya* 4.293):

saba' haite bhagyavanta—srl saka, vyanjana punah punah yaha prabhu karena grahana

“The spinach and vegetables are the most fortunate of all, for the Lord accepts them again and again.”

A *g-hastha* Vaisnava should perform devotional service with undeviated attention, knowing Krsna as the Lord of all. He should not disrespect the demigods worshiped by the *smarta-sampradaya.* As stated in *Sri Caitanya-bhagavata (Antya* 2.243):

na mane' caitanya-patha, bolaya vaisnava' sivere amanya kare vyartha ta 'ra saba

“If one claims to be a Vaisnava, but he disrespects Lord Siva and does not strictly follow the path exhibited by Lord Caitanya, all his efforts are futile.”

It is the duty of a *g-hastha* to work for the benefit of others even by giving up his own self-interest. In the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Antya* 3.365) it is said:

apanara bhala hau yete jana dekhe sujana apana chadiyao para rakhe

“Some people expect only benefits for themselves, but a gentleman cares for others while giving up his own interest.”

A *g-hastha* Vaisnava should respect and worship *tulasi.* As stated in *Sri Caitanya-bhagavata (Antya* 8.159-160):

sankhya nama laite ye sthane prabhu vaise tathai rakhena tulaslre prabhu pase

tulaslre dekhena, japena sankhya-nama e bhakti-yogera tattva ke bujhibe ana?

“Wherever the Lord sits to chant His rounds, He keeps *tulasi* before Him. He gazes at *tulasi* while He chants His rounds. Who can understand the science of devotional service?”

A householder with devotion is glorious, while a householder without devotion

is insignificant. Whatever social dealings a householder has to perform should be done while taking shelter of the holy name of Krsna. Regarding the character of the *mahajana* Sri Kalidasa, the *Caitanya-caritamrita (Antya* 16.6-7) states:

maha-bhagavata tenho sarala udara k-sna-nama- sankete' calaya vyavahara

kautukete tenho yadi pasaka khelaya hare k-sna' k-sna' kari' pasaka calaya

“Kalidasa was a very advanced devotee, yet he was simple and liberal. He would chant the holy name of Krsna while performing all his ordinary dealings. When he used to throw dice in jest, he would throw the dice while chanting Hare Krsna.” Everyone is prohibited from corrupt earning or spending, and workers are prohibited from accepting bribes. As stated by the Lord in the *Caitanya-caritamrita (Antya* 9.90, 142-144):

rajara vartana khaya, ara curi kare raja-dandya haya sei sastrera vicare

'vyaya na kariha kichu rajara mula-dhana'

rajara mula-dhana diya ye kichu labhya haya sei dhana kariha nana dharme-karme vyaya

asad-vyaya na kariha,—yate dui-loka yaya

“One who serves the government but misappropriates the government's revenue is liable to be punished by the king. That is the verdict of all revealed scriptures. Do not spend any of the King's revenue. First you should pay the revenue due the King, and then you may spend the balance for religious and fruitive activities.

Don't spend a farthing for sinful activities for which you will be the loser both in this life and the next.”

A *grhastha* should accept a spiritual master who is full of devotion and of pure character. As stated in *Sri Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya* 21.65):

guru yatha bhakti-sunya, tatha sisyagana

“As the guru is without devotion, so are the disciples.”

A householder should be particularly careful not to commit offenses against the Vaisnavas. In the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya* 22.33) the Lord says:

ye vaisnava-sthane aparadha haya ya 'ra punah sei ksamile se ghuce, nahe ara

“When someone offends a Vaisnava, he is not relieved until he is forgiven by that same Vaisnava.”

Serving devotees is a householder's main duty. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 16.57, 60):

vaisnavera sesa-bhaksanera eteka mahima kalidase paoyaila prabhura krpa-sima

bhakta-pada-dhuli ara bhakta-pada-jala bhakta-bhukta-avasesa—tina maha-bala

“Taking the remnants of the Vaisnavas' food is so valuable that it induced Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to offer Kalidasa His supreme mercy. The dust of the feet of a devotee, the water that has washed the feet of a devotee, and the remnants of food left by a devotee are three very powerful substances.”

In the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.20.27-8) Lord Krsna describes how a householder should act until his natural propensity for enjoying sense objects is overcome and he fully attains the characteristics of a pure devotee:

jata-sraddho mat-kathasu nirvinnah sarva-karmasu veda duhkhatmakan kaman parityage 'py anisvarah

tato bhajeta mam pritah   sraddhalur drdha-niscayah

jusamanas ca tan kaman duhkhodarkams ca garhayan

“Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories, being disgusted with all material activities, knowing that all sense gratification leads to misery, but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment, My devotee remains happy and worships Me with great faith and conviction. Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment, My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result, and he sincerely repents such activities.”

When a householder has faith, he should take initiation into the chanting of the Hare Krsna *maha-mantra.* As stated in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 22.64):

sraddhavanjana haya bhakti-adhikarl uttama', madhyama', kanistha'—sraddha-anusarl

“A faithful devotee is a truly eligible candidate for the loving service of the Lord. According to one's faith, one is classified as a topmost devotee, an intermediate devotee, or an inferior devotee.”

A *grhastha* Vaisnava must gradually acquire all the qualities mentioned in *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 22.78-80):

krpalu, akrta-droha, satya-sara sama nidosa, vadanya, mrdu, suci, akincana

sarvopakaraka, Santa, krsnaika-sarana akama, anlha, sthira, vijita-sad-guna

mita-bhuk, apramatta, manada, amanl gambhlra, karuna, maitra, kavi, daksa, maunl

“Devotees are always merciful, humble, truthful, equal to all, faultless, magnanimous, mild, and clean. They are without material possessions, and they perform welfare work for everyone. They are peaceful, surrendered to Krsna, and desireless. They are indifferent to material acquisitions and fixed in devotional service. They completely control the six bad qualities—lust, anger, greed, and so forth. They eat only as much as required, and they are not inebriated. They are respectful, grave, compassionate, and without false prestige. They are friendly, poetic, expert, and silent.”

A *grhastha* Vaisnava should be eager to associate with advanced devotees. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 22.83) it is stated:

krsna-bhakti-janma-mula haya sadhu-sanga'

“The root cause of devotional service to Lord Krsna is association with advanced devotees.”

Out of all the processes of devotional service, one should give earnest attention to the five limbs mentioned in *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 22.128-129) as follows:

sadhu-sanga, nama-klrtana, bhagavata-sravana mathura-vasa, srl-murtira sraddhaya sevana

sakala-sadhana-srestha ei panca anga krsna-prema janmaya ei pancera alpa sanga

“One should associate with devotees, chant the holy name of the Lord, hear *Srlmad-Bhagavatam,* reside at Mathura, and worship the Deity with faith and veneration. These five limbs of devotional service are the best of all. Even a slight performance of these five awakens love for Krsna.”

Gradually one should diminish the following of prescribed rules out of obligation and cultivate spontaneous attachment. When spontaneous attachment to the Lord is awakened, many prescriptions are automatically discarded and atonement becomes needless. The difference is described in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 22.140, 142-143) as follows:

kama tyaji' krsna bhaje sastra-ajna mani' deva-rsi-pitradikera kabhu nahe rna

vidhi-dharma chadi' bhaje krsnera carana nisiddha papacare tara kabhu nahe mana

ajnane va haya yadi papa' upasthita

krsna tanre suddha kare, na karaya prayascitta

“If a person gives up all material desires and completely engages in the transcendental loving service of Krsna, as enjoined in revealed scriptures, he is never indebted to demigods, sages, or forefathers. Although the pure devotee does not follow all the regulative principles of *varnasrama,* he worships the lotus feet of Krsna. Therefore he naturally has no tendency to commit sin. If, however, a devotee accidentally becomes involved in a sinful activity, Krsna purifies him. He does not have to undergo the regulative form of atonement.”

A *grhastha* Vaisnava should not endeavor for any knowledge or renunciation other than knowledge of one's relationship with the Lord in devotional service and renunciation born from devotional service. If one begins the worship of Krsna with special care and eagerness, then he achieves all auspiciousness. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 22.145):

jlana-vairagyadi—bhaktira kabhu nahe anga' ahimsa-yama-niyamadi bu\e krsna-bhakta-sanga

“The path of speculative knowledge and renunciation is not very essential for devotional service. Indeed, good qualities such as nonviolence and mind and sense control automatically accompany a devotee of Lord Krsna.”

The gradations of devotion to Lord Krsna are stated in the C*Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 23.10-13). One should cultivate them as follows:

sadhu-sanga haite haya sravana-klrtana' sadhana-bhaktye haya sarvanartha-nivartana'

anartha-nivrtti hai\e bhaktye nistha' haya nistha haite sravanadye ruci' upajaya

ruci haite bhaktye haya asakti' pracura asakti haite citte janme krsne prlty-ankura

sei bhava' gadha hai\e dhare prema'-nama sei prema—prayojana' sarvananda-dhama

“When one is encouraged in devotional service by the association of devotees, one becomes free from all unwanted contamination by following the regulative principles and chanting and hearing. When one is freed from all unwanted contamination, he advances with firm faith. When firm faith in devotional service awakens, a taste for hearing and chanting also awakens. After taste is awakened, a deep attachment arises, and from that attachment the seed of love for Krsna grows in the heart. When that ecstatic emotional stage intensifies, it is called love of Godhead. Such love is life's ultimate goal and the reservoir of all pleasure.”

A *grhastha* Vaisnava should constantly chant the holy names while carefully giving up the ten offenses. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritamrta* (*Antya* 4.70-71):

bhajanera madhye srestha nava-vidha bhakti 'krsna-prema', 'krsna' dite dhare maha-sakti

tara madhye sarva-srestha nama-sanklrtana niraparadhe nama laile paya prema-dhana

“Among the ways of executing devotional service, the nine prescribed methods are the best, for these processes have great potency to deliver Krsna and ecstatic love for Him. Of the nine processes of devotional service, the most important is to always chant the holy name of the Lord. If one does so, avoiding the ten kinds of offenses, one very easily obtains the most valuable love of Godhead.”

A householder should accept pure devotional service that is not based simply on religious sentiments. In the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya* 23.41) the Lord states:

mora nrtya dekhite uhara kon sakti? payah pan karile ki mote haya bhakti?

“What qualification does he have to watch My dancing? By drinking milk can one attain devotion for Me?”

The mood of servitude is proper for a living entity, and the mood of being lord is detrimental. As stated in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya* 23.480, 482):

udara-bharana lagi' ebe papa saba laoyaya Isvara ami'—mule jaradgava

kukkurera bhaksya deha—ihare laiya balaye Isvara' visnu-maya mugdha haiya

“All sinful persons claim to be God in order to fill their bellies, although factually they are idiots. Accepting the material body, which is meant to be eaten by the dogs, they call themselves God under the influence by Lord Visnu's external energy.”

A *grhastha* Vaisnava should model his character after that of Lord Caitanya and His followers. A householder should follow the ways of life and obtain his means of livelihood as exhibited by Lord Caitanya and His followers. If one desires Krsna in all his activities, then those activities are auspicious. By endeavoring to gratify one's senses and attain irrelevant fruits, one becomes a materialist. For a devotee, to remain a householder or to become a renunciate is the same thing. Srila Ramananda Raya, Sri Pundarika Vidyanidhi, Sri Srivasa Pandita, Sri Sivananda Sena, Sri Satyaraja Khan, and Sri Advaita Prabhu were all *grhasthas* and have shown us the way of faultless living. The difference between a householder and a renunciate is due to their different means of livelihood. If the home is favorable for a devotee's devotional service, then he should not leave. It is his duty to remain a *grhastha* with detachment. But when the home becomes unfavorable for his service, he then becomes eligible to leave home. At that time the detachment he develops for his house through his

devotional service is accepted. For this reason, Srivasa Pandita did not leave home. For this reason, Svarupa Damodara took *sannyasa.* All genuine devotees have remained either at home or in the forest due to this consideration. Whoever has left home due to this consideration is called a genuine renunciate. He is always careful not to commit offenses against the holy name. Now let us consider the occupation of a renunciate. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 6.222-227, 236-237) Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu spoke to the renunciate Raghunatha dasa Gosvami as follows:

bhala kaila, vairagira dharma acarila

“Raghunatha dasa has done well, he has acted suitably for a person in the renounced order.

vairagi karibe sada nama-sankirtana magiya khana kare jivana raksana

“A person in the renounced order should always chant the holy name of the Lord. He should beg some alms to eat, and he should sustain his life in this way.

vairagi hana yeba kare parapeksa karya-siddhi nahe, krsna karena upeksa

“A *vairagi* [a person in the renounced order] should not depend on others. If he does so, he will be unsuccessful, and he will be neglected by Krsna.

vairagi hana kare jihvara lalasa paramartha yaya, ara haya rasera vasa

“If a renunciate is eager for his tongue to taste different foods, his spiritual life will be lost, and he will be subservient to the tastes of his tongue.

vairagira krtya—sada nama-sankirtana saka-patra-phala-mule udara-bharana

“The duty of a person in the renounced order is to chant the Hare Krsna mantra always. He should satisfy his belly with whatever vegetables, leaves, fruits, and roots are available.

*jihvara lalase yei iti-uti dhaya sisnodara-parayana krsna nahi paya_*

“One who is subservient to the tongue and who thus goes here and there, devoted to the genitals and the belly, cannot attain Krsna.

gramya-katha na sunibe, gramya-varta na kahibe bhala na khaibe ara bhala na paribe

“Do not talk like people in general or hear what they say. You should not eat very palatable food, nor should you dress very nicely.

amani manada hana krsna-nama sada la'be vraje radha-krsna-seva manase karibe

“Do not expect honor, but offer all respect to others. Always chant the holy name of Lord Krsna, and within your mind render service to Radha and Krsna in Vrndavana.

A *sannyasi* or a renunciate should not live in his village with his relatives. As stated

sannyaslra dharma nahe—sannyasa karina nija janma-sthane rahe kutumba lana

“After accepting *sannyasa,* it is not the duty of a *sannyasi* to remain at his birthplace, encircled by relatives.”

A renunciate should not meet a king or woman. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 11.7) the Lord said:

virakta sannyasi amara raja-darasana strl-darasana-sama visera bhaksana

“Since I am in the renounced order, it is as dangerous for Me to meet a king as to meet a woman. To meet either would be just like drinking poison.”

A renunciate should remain faultless. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 12.51, 53):

sukla-vastre masi-bindu yaiche na lukaya sannyaslra alpa chidra sarva-loke gaya

prabhu kahe,—purna yaiche dugdhera kalasa sura-bindu-pate keha na kare parasa

“As soon as the general public finds a little fault in the behavior of a *sannyasi,*

they advertise it like wildfire. A black spot of ink cannot be hidden on a white cloth. It is always very prominent. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu then said: There may be much milk in a big pot, but if it is contaminated by a drop of liquor, it is untouchable.” The behavior of a renunciate is explained in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 17.229):

preme garagara mana ratri-divase snana-bhiksadi-nirvaha karena abhyase

“His mind was absorbed in great ecstatic love day and night. He ate and bathed simply out of habit.”

The symptoms of a psuedo-renunciate are stated by the Lord in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 2.117-118, 120, 124, 5.35-36):

prabhu kahe,—vairagl kare prakrti sambhasana dekhite na paron ami tahara vadana

durvara indriya kare visaya-grahana daravl prakrti hare muner api mana

ksudra-jlva saba markata-vairagya kariya indriya caraM bule prakrti' sambhasiya

prabhu kahe,—mora vasa nahe mora mana prakrti-sambhasl vairagl na kare darsana

ami ta' sannyasi, apanare virakta kari' mani darsana rahu dure, prakrtira' nama yadi suni

tabahin vikara paya mora tanu-mana

prakrti-darsane sthira haya konjana?

“The Lord replied: I cannot tolerate seeing the face of a person who has accepted the renounced order of life but who still talks intimately with a woman.
So strongly do the senses adhere to the objects of their enjoyment that indeed a wooden statue of a woman attracts the mind of even a great saintly person.
There are many persons with little in their possession who accept the renounced order of life like monkeys. They go here and there engaging in sense gratification and speaking intimately with women. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said: My mind is not under My control. It does not like to see anyone in the

renounced order who talks intimately with women. I am a *sannyasi,* and I certainly consider Myself renounced. But not to speak of seeing a woman, if I even hear the name of a woman, I feel changes in My mind and body. Therefore who could remain unmoved by the sight of a woman? It is very difficult.”

Again, detachment in the heart of a householder is greatly appreciated. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta* (*Antya* 5.80) the Lord says:

grhastha' hana nahe raya sad-vargera vase visayl' hana sannyaslre upadese

“Although Ramananda Raya was a householder, he was not under the control of the six kinds of bodily change. Although apparently a pounds-and-shillings man, he advised even persons in the renounced order.”

A renunciate should not eat foods or accept goods from materialistic people, nor should he invite other renunciates to eat foods or accept goods from such people. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 6.274-275) Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami concludes as follows:

visaylra dravya lana kari nimantrana prasanna na haya ihaya jani prabhura mana

mora citta dravya la-ite na haya nirmala ei nimantrane dekhi,— pratistha'-matra phala

“I invite Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu by accepting goods from materialistic people. I know that the Lord's mind is not satisfied by this. My consciousness is impure because I accept all these goods from people who are interested only in pounds, shillings, and pence. Therefore by this kind of invitation I only get some material reputation.”

The Lord replied in *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 6.278-279):

visaylra anna khaile malina haya mana malina mana haile nahe krsnera smarana

visaylra anna haya rajasa' nimantrana data, bhokta—dunhara malina haya mana

“When one eats food offered by a materialistic man, one's mind becomes

contaminated, and when the mind is contaminated, one is unable to think of Krsna properly. When one accepts an invitation from a person contaminated by the material mode of passion, the person who offers the food and the person who accepts it are both mentally contaminated.”

It is not proper for a renunciate to expect unasked for charity. In the *Caitanya-*

prabhu kahe,—bhala kaila, chadila simha-dvara simha-dvare bhiksa-vrtti —vesyara acara

chatre yai yatha-labha udara-bharana anya katha nahi, sukhe krsna-sankirtana”

“Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said: He has done very well by no longer standing at the Simha-dvara gate. Such begging of alms resembles the behavior of a prostitute. If one goes to the booth where free food is distributed and fills his belly with whatever he obtains, there is no chance of further unwanted talk and one can very peacefully chant the Hare Krsna *maha-mantra.”*

A renunciate should not construct big temples or residences. By doing so, he becomes entangled in household activities. He should meditate on the service of worshiping *govardhana-sila.* In the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 6.296-297) it is stated:

eka kunja jala ara tulasi-manjan sattvika-seva ei—suddha-bhave kari

dui-dike dui-patra madhye komala manjari ei-mata asta-manjari dibe sraddha kari'

“For such worship, one needs a jug of water and a few flowers from a *tulasi* tree. This is worship in complete goodness when performed in complete purity. With faith and love, you should offer eight soft *tulasi* flowers, each with two *tulasi* leaves, one on each side of each flower.”

Devotees accept the *sannyasa* order of life only in special situations; it is not always required. A Vaisnava born in a *brahmana's* family can take such *sannyasa* when he leaves home, but he should not accept the limbs that are averse to his devotional service. Regarding the characteristics of Svarupa Damodara Prabhu, it is stated in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 10.107-108):

niscinte krsna bhajiba' ei ta' karane unmade karila tenha sannyasa grahane

sannyasa karila sikha-sutra-tyaga-rupa yoga-patta na nila, nama haila svarupa'

“He was very enthusiastic to worship Sri Krsna without disturbance; therefore it was almost in madness that he accepted the *sannyasa* order. Upon accepting *sannyasa,* Purusottama Acarya followed the regulative principles by giving up his tuft of hair and sacred thread, but he did not accept the saffron colored dress. Also, he did not accept a *sannyasi* title but remained as a *naisthika-brahmacari.”*

Someone may accept *sannyasa* in the form of minimizing his needs. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 20.78, 81) there is the following statement regarding the character of Sri Sanatana Gosvami:

tabe misra puratana eka dhuti dila tenho dui bahirvasa-kaupina karila

sanatana kahe,—ami madhukari kariba

bmhmanera ghare kene ekatra bhiksa laba?

“When Tapana Misra gave Sanatana Gosvami a used *dhoti,* Sanatana immediately tore it in pieces to make two sets of outer cloth and underwear. Sanatana replied: I shall practice the process of *madhukara.* Why should I accept full meals in the house of a *brahmanaT*’

The Lord's response is found in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 20.92):

tina mudrara bhota gaya, madhukara grasa dharma-hani haya, loka kare upahasa

“It is contradictory to practice *madhukara* and at the same time wear a valuable blanket. One loses his spiritual strength by doing this, and one will also become an object for jokes.”

Regarding the association of a Vaisnava *sannyasa*, the character of Sri Madhavendra Puri is described in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Antya* 4.419-421, 423-424, 426, 428):

visnu-maya vase loka kuchui na jane sakala jagat baddha maha tamo-gune

“People were conditioned by the mode of ignorance and had lost all knowledge due to the influence of *visnu-maya*.

loka dekhi' duhkha bhave sra madhavapura hena nahi, tilarddha sambhasa ya're kari

“Srila Madhavendra Puri was deeply pained by the godlessness of the people, and he found no one to speak to.

sannyasara sane va karena sambhasana seha apanare matra bale 'narayana'

“Sometimes he would speak to the *sannyasas*, but to his dismay he found that they claimed to be Narayana.

jnana, yoga, tapasva, sannyasa' khyati ya'ra ka'ra mukhe nahi dasya mahima pracara

“Jnams, yogis, *tapasvas*, and famous *sannayas* never spoke about the glories of serving the Supreme Lord.

yata adhyapaka saba tarka se vakhane ta'ra saba krsnera vigraha nahi mane'

“All the teachers and professors were only interested in logic and argument. They refused to accept the spiritual form of Lord Krsna.

loka madhye bhrami kene vaisnava dekhite kothao vaisnava' nama na suni jagate

“Srila Madhavendra Puri thought: Why am I roaming amongst people searching for a Vaisnava? Wherever I go I don't even hear the word 'Vaisnava'.

eteke se, vana bhala e saba haite vane katha nahe avaisnavera sahite

“Therefore he considered it better to stay in the forest where he did not have to speak with nondevotees.”

A Vaisnava *sannyasi* should give up the use of Mayavadi markings. Concerning the character of Sri Brahmananda Bharati, the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 10.154) says:

brahmananda pariyache mrga-carmambara taha dekhi' prabhu duhkha paila antara

“When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His devotees approached him, they saw that he was covered with a deerskin. Seeing this, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu became very unhappy.”

Regarding the pure *grhastha* Vaisnavis, the lady devotees, the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 12.42) describes the procedure for seeing a *sannyasi:*

purvavat prabhu kaila sabara milana strl-saba dura ha-ite kaila prabhura darasana

“Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu received them all, just as He had in previous years. The women, however, saw the Lord from a distance.”

A renunciate Vaisnava is prohibited from all kinds of enjoyment. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 12.108):

prabhu kahe,—sannyaslra nahi taile adhikara tahate sugandhi taila—parama dhikkara!

“The Lord replied: A *sannyasi* has no use for oil, especially perfumed oil such as this. Take it out immediately.”

A renunciate Vaisnava is forbidden from hearing the singing of a woman. As described in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 13.78, 80, 83-85):

eka-dina prabhu yamesvara-tota yaite sei-kale deva-dasl lagila gaite

dure gana suni' prabhura ha-ila avesa strl, purusa, ke gaya—na jane visesa

strl gaya' bali' govinda prabhure kaila kole

strl-nama suni' prabhura bahya ha-ila

prabhu kahe,—govinda, aji rakhila jlvana strl-parasa haile amara ha-ita marana

“One day when the Lord was going to the temple of Yamesvara, a female singer

began to sing in the Jagannatha temple. Hearing the song from a distance, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu immediately became ecstatic. He did not know whether it was a man or a woman singing. Just then Govinda caught the Lord in his arms and cried: It is a woman singing! As soon as He heard the word 'woman,' the Lord became externally conscious. My dear Govinda, He said, you have saved My life. If I had touched the body of a woman, I would certainly have died.”

Concerning a renunciate's bedding, the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 13.5-7, 10, 12, 14-15, 17-19) states as follows:

kalara saralate, sayana, ati kslna kaya sahite nare jagadananda, srjila upaya

suksma vastra ani' gaurika diya rangaila simuhra tula diya taha pUraila

tuh-balisa dekhi' prabhu krodhavista ha-ila

govindere kahi' sei tuli dura kaila

prabhu kahena,—khata eka anaha padite jagadananda cahe amaya visaya bhunjaite

sannyasa manusa amara bhUmite sayana amare khata-tuli-balisa mastaka-mundana

svarUpa-gosani tabe srjila prakara kadahra suska-patra anila apara

nakhe ciri' ciri' taha ati suksma kaila prabhura bahirvasa duite se saba bharila

ei-mata dui kaila odana-padane anglkara kaila prabhu aneka yatane

“The Lord was very thin, and He would lay down to rest on the dry bark of plantain trees. Jagadananda could not tolerate this, so he devised a remedy. He acquired some fine cloth and colored it with red oxide. Then he filled it with cotton from a *Simula* tree. When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu saw the quilt and pillow, He was immediately very angry. The Lord asked Govinda to put aside the quilt and pillow. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said: You should bring a bedstead here for Me to lie on. Jagadananda wants Me to enjoy material happiness. I am in the renounced order, and therefore I must lie on the floor. For Me to use a bedstead, quilt, or pillow would be very shameful. Then Svarupa

Damodara Gosvami devised another method. First he secured a large quantity of dry banana leaves. He then tore the leaves into very fine fibers with his nails and filled two of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's outer garments with the fibers. In this way, Svarupa Damodara made some bedding and a pillow, and after much endeavor by the devotees, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu accepted them."

Regarding a renunciate's food, the Lord has said in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 8.84-85):

prabhu kahe,—sabe kene purare kara rosa? sahaja' dharma kahe tenho, tanra kiba dosa?

yati hana jihva-lampatya—atyanta anyaya yatira dharma,—prana rakhite ahara-matra khaya

"Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu replied: Why are all of you angry at Ramacandra Puri? He is expounding the natural principles of *sannyasa* life. Why are you accusing him? For a *sannyasa* to indulge in satisfying the tongue is a great offense. The duty of a *sannyasa* is to eat only as much as needed to keep body and soul together."

All the above mentioned items are accepted as the proper occupations of renunciate Vaisnavas.

Now the proper occupations for all Vaisnavas—householders and renunciates—will be explained. There is no duty in the age Kali other than chanting the holy names and mantras of Krsna. It is necessary for everyone to take initiation into the chanting of the holy name of Krsna. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Adi* 7.73-74, 97 and 17.30, 75):

krsna-mantra haite habe samsara-mocana krsna-nama haite pabe krsnera carana

"Simply by chanting the holy name of Krsna one can obtain freedom from material existence. Indeed, simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra one will be able to see the lotus feet of the Lord.

nama vinu kali-kale nahi ara dharma sarva-mantra-sara nama, ei sastra-marma

"In this Age of Kali there is no religious principle other than the chanting of the

holy name, which is the essence of all Vedic hymns. This is the purport of all scriptures.

krsna-name ye ananda-sindhu-asvadana brahmananda tara age khatodaka-sama

“Compared to the ocean of transcendental bliss that is tasted by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, the pleasure derived from impersonal Brahman realization *[brahmananda]* is like the shallow water in a canal.

sada nama la-iba, yatha-labhete santosa eita acara kare bhakti-dharma-posa

“One should strictly follow the principle of always chanting the holy name, and one should be satisfied with whatever he gets easily. Such devotional behavior solidly maintains one's devotional service.

jnana-karma-yoga-dharme nahe krsna vasa krsna-vasa-hetu eka—prema-bhakti-rasa

“By following the paths of speculative philosophical knowledge, fruitive activity, or mystic yoga to control the senses, one cannot satisfy Krsna, the Supreme Lord. Unalloyed devotional love for Krsna is the only cause for the Lord's satisfaction.” The proper procedure and proper instruction for accepting a spiritual master is given in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 8.128, 221, 229) as follows:

kiba vipra, kiba nyasi, sudra kene naya yei krsna-tattva-vetta, sei guru' haya

raganuga-marge tanre bhaje yei jana sei-jana paya vraje vrajendra-nandana

siddha-dehe cinti' kare tahanni sevana sakhi-bhave paya radha-krsnera carana

“Whether one is a *brahmana,* a *sannyasi,* or a *sudra*—regardless of what he is—he can become a spiritual master if he knows the science of Krsna. If one worships the

Lord on the path of spontaneous love and goes to Vrndavana, he receives the shelter of Vrajendra-nandana, the son of Nanda Maharaja. After thinking of Radha and Krsna and Their pastimes for a long time and after getting completely free from material contamination, one is transferred to the spiritual world. There

the devotee attains an opportunity to serve Radha and Krsna as one of the *gopis.”*

One needs to always associate with devotees. One should associate with affectionate devotees who are more advanced, yet of the same temperament. As explained in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 8.251):

sreyo-madhye kona sreyah jfvera haya sara? krsna-bhakta-sanga vina sreyah nahi ara

“Out of all auspicious and beneficial activities, which is best for the living entity? Ramananda Raya replied: The only auspicious activity is association with the devotees of Krsna.”

Although a Vaisnava comes from a bona fide *sampradaya*, his association should be considered according to the Lord's statements in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya&a160;*9.276-277):

prabhu kahe,—karml, jnanl,—dui bhakti-hina tomara sampradaye dekhi sei dui cihna

sabe, eka guna dekhi tomara sampradaye satya-vigraha kari' isvare karaha niscaye

“Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said: Both the fruitive worker and the speculative philosopher are considered nondevotees. We see both elements present in your&a160;*sampradaya.* The only qualification that I see in your *sampradaya* is that you accept&a160;the form of the Lord as truth.”

One should not remain in a place where incompatible mixtures of mellows or contradictions in the conclusions of devotional service are presented. The&a160;*Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 10.113) has the following statement:

bhakti-siddhanta-viruddha, ara rasabhasa sunite na haya prabhura cittera ullasa

“Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was never pleased to hear books or verses opposed to the conclusive statements of devotional service. The Lord did not like hearing&a160;*rasabhasa,* the overlapping of transcendental mellows.”

One should carefully gather the good qualities needed for devotional service. The nature of a devotee is described in *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 7.72) as follows:

mahanubhavera cittera svabhava ei haya puspa-sama komala, kathina vajra-maya

“This is the nature of the mind of an uncommon personality. Sometimes it is soft like a flower, but sometimes it is as hard as a thunderbolt.”

The welfare activities of a devotee are described in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 8.39) as follows:

mahanta-svabhava ei tarite pamara nija karya nahi tabu yana tara ghara

“It is the general practice of all saintly people to deliver the fallen. Therefore they go to people's houses, although they have no personal business there.”

In the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 11.4) the Lord gives an example of how a devotee should pledge:

prabhu kahe,—kaha tumi, nahi kichu bhaya yogya haile kariba, ayogya haile naya

“The Lord gave the Bhattacarya assurance that he could speak without fear, but added that if his statement was suitable He would accept it, and if it were not, He&a160;would reject it.”

The benefits of dealing affectionately with a devotee are described in the C*Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 11.26) as follows:

prabhu kahe,—tumi krsna-bhakata-pradhana tomake ye prlti kare, sei bhagyavan

“Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu then said: My dear Ramananda Raya, you are the foremost of all the devotees of Krsna; therefore whoever loves you is certainly a&a160;very fortunate person.”

Firm determination for one's attachment is described in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 12.31) as follows:

kintu anuraga lokera svabhava eka haya ista na paile nija prana se chadaya

“Still, isn't it the nature of an attached man to give up his life if he does not attain his desired object?”

Teaching others by one's good example is described in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 12.117) as follows:

tumi bhala kariyacha, sikhaha anyere ei-mata bhala karma seho yena kare

“The Lord would say: You have done well. Please teach this to others so that they may act in the same way.”

The need for care and eagerness in the execution of devotional service is described in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 24.171) as follows:

yatnagraha vina bhakti na janmaya preme

“Without sincere endeavor in devotional service, one cannot attain love of Godhead.” The need for giving up the association of logicians is described in the&a160;*Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 12.183) as follows:

tarkika-srgala-sange bheu-bheu kari sei mukhe ebe sada kahi 'krsna' hari'

“In the association of the jackals known as logicians, I simply continued to bark a resounding bheu bheu.' Now, from the same mouth I am chanting the holy names&a160;Krsna and Hari.”

An example of unhappiness by seeing the distress of others is given in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 15.162-163) as follows:

jlvera duhkha dekhi' mora hrdaya bidare sarva-jlvera papa prabhu deha' mora sire

jivera papa lana muni Aaron naraka bhoga sakala jivera, prabhu, ghucaha bhava-roga

“My Lord, my heart breaks to see the sufferings of all conditioned souls; therefore I request You to transfer the karma of their sinful lives upon my head. My dear&a160;Lord, let me suffer perpetually in a hellish condition, accepting all the sinful&a160;reactions of all living entities. Please finish their diseased material life.”

The need for a pure heart is described in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 15.274) as follows:

sahaje nirmala ei brahmana'-hrdaya krsnera vasite ei yogya-sthana haya

“The heart of a *brahmana* is by nature very clean; therefore it is a proper place for Krsna to sit.”

One must give up envy, or the distress arising from seeing other's prosperity. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 15.275) this is described as follows:

matsarya'-candala kene ihan vasaile parama pavitra sthana apavitra kaile

“Why have you allowed jealousy to sit here also? Because of this, you have become like a *candala*, the lowest of men, and you have also contaminated a most purified&a160;place—your heart.”

One must be a staunch follower of Lord Caitanya. As described in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 16.148):

prabhu lagi' dharma-karma chade bhakta-gana bhakta-dharma-hani prabhura na haya sahana

“All the devotees would abandon all kinds of duties for Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's sake, yet the Lord did not like the devotees' giving up their promised duties.”

The need to completely abandon faults is described in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 20.91) as follows:

se kene rakhibe tomara sesa visaya-bhoga? roga khandi' sad-vaidya na rakhe sesa roga

“Why should Krsna allow you to maintain a last bit of material attachment? After vanquishing a disease, a good physician does not allow any of the disease to&a160;remain.”

The devotee's faith in the conclusions of devotional service is described in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 22.62) as follows:

sraddha'-sabde—visvasa kahe sudrdha niscaya krsne bhakti kaile sarva-karma krta haya

“By rendering transcendental loving service to Krsna, one automatically performs all subsidiary activities. This confident, firm faith, favorable to the discharge of&a160;devotional service, is called *sraddha.”*

The need for total surrender is described in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 22.102) as follows:

sarana lana kare krsne atma-samarpana krsna tare kare tat-kale atma-sama

“When a devotee thus fully surrenders unto Krsna's lotus feet, Krsna accepts him as one of His confidential associates.

One must give up atheistic philosophies with repentance as described in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Madhya* 25.43):

paramartha-vicara gela, kari matra vada' kahan mukti paba, kahan krsnera prasada

“The atheists, headed by the Mayavadt philosophers, do not care for liberation or Krsna's mercy. They simply continue to put forward false arguments and countertheories to atheistic philosophy, not considering or engaging in spiritual matters.”&a160;A devotee should always be neutral. As described in the *Caitanya-caritamrta&a160;(Antya* 3.23):

nirapeksa' nahile dharma' na yaya raksane

“Without being neutral one cannot protect religious principles.”

The devotee should be afraid of insulting other Vaisnavas. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 3.164):

mahantera apamana ye desa-grame haya eka janara dose saba desa ujadaya

“Wherever an advanced devotee is insulted, for one man's fault the entire town or place is afflicted.”

The devotees' duty is to practice forgiveness and show mercy. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 3.213, 237) and the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Adi* 13.182):

bhakta-svabhava,—ajna-dosa ksama kare

dine daya kare,—ei sadhu-svabhava haya

prabhu bole,—vipra saba danta parihari' bhaja giya krsna, sarvabhute daya kari'

“A characteristic of a pure devotee is that he excuses any offense by an ignorant rascal. It is a characteristic of all saintly persons to be kind toward the poor

and&a160;fallen. The Lord said: O *brahmanaZ* Give up all pride and serve Krsna by showing&a160;mercy to all.”

The devotee's duty is to preach by setting a good example. As explained in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 4.103):

acara', pracara',—namera karaha dui' karya tumi—sarva-guru, tumi jagatera arya

“You simultaneously perform both duties in relation to the holy name by your personal behavior and by your preaching. Therefore you are the spiritual master of&a160;the entire world, for you are the most advanced devotee in the world.”

The devotee's duty is to follow Vaisnava etiquette. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 4.130):

tathapi bhakta-svabhava—maryada-raksana maryada-palana haya sadhura bhusana

“Still, it is the characteristic of a devotee to observe and protect Vaisnava etiquette. Maintenance of Vaisnava etiquette is the ornament of a devotee.”

One should consider a Vaisnava's body spiritual. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 4.191) it is said:

prabhu kahe,—vaisnava-deha prakrta' kabhu naya aprakrta' deha bhaktera cid-ananda-maya'

“Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said: The body of a devotee is never material. It is considered to be transcendental, full of spiritual bliss.”

There is a need for worshiping Krsna in a solitary place after completing one's activities of household life and sense gratification. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta 160;(Antya* 4.214-216) it is described:

eka-vatsara rupa-gosanira gaude vilamba haila kutumbera sthiti'-artha vibhaga kari' dila

gaude ye artha chila, taha anaila kutumba-brahmana-devalaye banti' dila

saba manah-katha gosani kari' nirvahana niscinta hana slghra aila vrndavana

“Srila Rupa Gosvami was delayed in Bengal for a year because he was dividing his money among his relatives to situate them in their proper positions. He collected&a160;whatever money he had accumulated in Bengal and divided it among his relatives,&a160;the *brahmanas,* and the temples. Thus after finishing all the tasks he had on his&a160;mind, he returned to Vrndavana fully satisfied.”

The devotee must give up the desire for fame. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 5.78):

mahanubhavera ei sahaja svabhava' haya apanara guna nahi apane kahaya

“This is a natural characteristic of those advanced in devotional service. They do not personally speak of their own good qualities.”

A devotee should have no faith in worldly poetry. As described in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 5.107):

gramya-kavira kavitva sunite haya duhkha' vidagdha-atmlya-vakya sunite haya sukha'

“Hearing the poetry of a person who has no transcendental knowledge and who writes about the relationships between man and woman simply causes&a160;unhappiness, whereas hearing the words of a devotee fully absorbed in ecstatic&a160;love causes great happiness.”

It is an offense to disobey the order of the spiritual master. The result is described in the C*Caitanya-caritamrta* (*Antya* 8.99):

guru upeksa kaile, aiche phala haya krame Isvara-paryanta aparadhe thekaya

“If one's spiritual master rejects him, one becomes so fallen that he, like Ramacandra Puri, commits offenses even to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”&a160;A devotee should give up the desire for liberation and pride of learning. As&a160;described in the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 13.109-110):

ramadasa yadi prathama prabhure milila mahaprabhu adhika tanre krpa na karila

antare mumuksu tenho, vidya-garvavan

“When Ramadasa Visvasa met Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the Lord did not show him any special mercy, although this was their first meeting. Within his heart,&a160;Ramadasa Visvasa was an impersonalist who desired to merge into the existence of&a160;the Lord, and he was very proud of his learning.”

Humility is essential for a devotee. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya* 20.28) it is described:

premera svabhava—yahan premera sambandha sei mane,— krsne mora nahi prema-gandha'

“Wherever there is a relationship of love of Godhead, the natural symptoms are that the devotee does not think himself a devotee, but always thinks that he has&a160;not even a drop of love for Krsna.”

A devotee should give up the desire for conquest. As stated in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Adi* 13.173):

dig-vijaya kariba'—vidyara karya nahe Isvare bhajile, sei vidya satya' kahe

“Conquering the world by means of material education is not desirable. If one engages himself in devotional service, his education is perfected.”

A devotee should know the Lord is one without a second and understand His relationship with all living entities. In the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Adi* 16.76-78, 8081) it is said:

suna, bapa, sabarai ekai Isvara

nama-matra bheda kare hinduye yavane paramarthe eka' kahe korane purane

eka suddha nitya-vastu akhanda avyaya paripurna hana vaise sabara hrdaya

se prabhura nama-guna sakala jagate balena sakale matra nija-sastra mate

ye Isvara, se punah sabara bhava laya himsa karilei se, tahana himsa haya

“My dear Sir, there is only one God for all living entities. The difference

between the Moslem God and the Hindu God is in name only. According to all scriptures—&a160;*Koran* or *Purana*—God is one. He is the nondual, eternal, transcendental Absolute&a160;Truth, infallible and perfectly complete, and in that capacity He resides in&a160;everyone's heart. The Supreme Lord's transcendental name and qualities are&a160;glorified throughout the world according to the respective scriptures. The Lord&a160;accepts everyone's individual mood of surrender. By committing violence to&a160;others, you commit violence to Him."

How a devotee should be always firmly fixed on the path of devotional service is seen in the following verse from *Caitanya-bhagavata (Adi* 16.94):

khanda khanda hai' deha yaya yadi prana tabu ami vadane na chadi hari-nama

"Even if my body is cut into pieces and I loose my life, I will never give up chanting the Lord's holy name."

How a devotee should deal with an enemy is described in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Adi* 16.113):

e saba jivere krsna! karaha prasada mora drohe nahu e sabara aparadha

"O Krsna! Be merciful on these living entities! Forgive their offense of torturing me."

A devotee must give up the symptoms of pride such as desire for fame and cheating. In the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Adi* 16.228-229) it is said:

bada loka kari' loka januka amare apanare prakatai dharma-karma kare

e sakala dambhikera krsne priti nai akaitava haile se krsna-bhakti pai

"He is presenting himself as a important person by imitating some religious sentiments. Actually this arrogant and deceitful *brahmana* has no love for Krsna.

To achieve the devotional service of Lord Krsna one has to be free from duplicity." A devotee must reject caste consciousness in his spiritual life. In the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Adi* 16.238-239) it is stated:

adhama kulete yadi visnu-bhakti haya tathapi se-i se pujya—sarva-sastre kaya

uttama kulete janmi' sri krsne na bhaje kule tara ki karibe, narakete maje

“If a devotee of the Lord is born in a low-class family, he is still worthy of worship; that is the injunction of the scriptures. And if someone is born in a high-class&a160;family but does not worship the lotus feet of Sri Krsna, then his high birth is&a160;useless and he falls to hell.”

The benefits of loud congregational chanting of the holy names is described in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Adi* 16.284-286) as follows:

japa kartta haite ucca-sankirtana-kari sata-guna adhika se puranete dhari

suna vipra! mana diya ihara karana japi' apanare sabe karaye posana

ucca kari' karile govinda sankirtana jantu-matra suninai paya vimocana

“The *Puranas* say that a person who chants the Lord's name loudly is a hundred times more pious that the person who chants to himself. O *brahmana*, listen&a160;carefully to the reason behind this. One who chants softly liberates only himself,

but one who loudly chants the names of Govinda liberates himself along with all living entities who hear him.”

A devotee should not carry the burden of the scriptures like an ass; rather, he should understand their purport. The *Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya* 1.158)&a160;confirms this in the following words:

sastrera na jane marma, adhyapana hare garddabhera praya yena sastra bahi' mare

“One who teaches the scriptures without knowing their purport is like an ass carrying the load of all the scriptures.”

How a devotee should give up enviousness is explained in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya* 1.240) as follows:

bhakti-hina karma kona phala nahi paya sei karma bhakti-hina—parahimsa yaya

“Activities that are devoid of *bhakti* produce no result. Such activities result in violence to others.”

A devotee should give up *seva-aparadhas*, or offenses in serving the Deity. As stated in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya* 5.121):

seva-vigrahera prati anadara ya ra visnu-sthane aparadha sarvatha tahara

“One who has no respect for the Deity form of the Lord is constantly committing offenses at the lotus feet of Lord Visnu.”

If a person is internally situated as a Vaisnava even though externally he maintains attachment for sense gratification, then he is counted as a devotee. As described in&a160;the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya* 7.22, 38):

visayira praya tan 'ra paricchada saba cinite na pare keha tinho ye vaisnava

asiya rahila navadvipe gudharupe parama bhogira praya sarvaloke dekhe

“Pundarlka Vidyanidhi dressed like a materialistic. No one was able to recognise that he was a great Vaisnava. He came to Nabadvtpa and remained there incognito.&a160;Everyone saw him as a grossly materialistic person.”

A devotee should not maintain false pride due to material education and so on. In the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya* 9.234) it is explained:

ki karibe vidya, dhana, rupa, yasa, kule ahankara badi' saba padaye nirmule

“What is the use of education, wealth, beauty, fame, and high birth? They only increase one's pride to the point of his falldown.”

A devotee should remain fixed in the principles of Vaisnavism, he should not support various opinions for social reasons. As stated in the *Caitanya-bhagavata&a160;(Madhya* 10.185, 188, 192):

ksane dante trna laya, ksane jathi mare o khada jathiya veta na dekhibe more

prabhu bale,—o veta yakhana yatha yaya sei mata katha kahi' tathai misaya

bhakti-sthane uhara haila aparadha etake uhara haila darasana badha

“Sometimes he takes straw in his mouth, and sometimes he beats Me with a stick. Therefore he is not fit to see Me. The \lord continuedc Wherever he goes, he mixes&a160;with those people and talks like them. He is an offender at the feet of Bhakti, that&a160;is why he is forbidden to see Me.”

The fault of taking sides against a Vaisnava is described in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya* 13.160) as followsc

ye papistha eka vaisnavera paksa haya anya vaisnavere ninde, sei yaya ksaya

“A sinful person who takes the side of one Vaisnava and condemns another is vanquished.”

A devotee should not commit sinful activities after accepting the holy name of the \lord. As stated in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya* **13.225)**c

prabhu bale,—tora ara na karis papa jagai madhai bale,—ara nare bapa

“The \lord saidc Do not commit further sins. Jagai and Madhai repliedc Never again, O \lord.”

How a devotee should remain aloof from the rules and regulations is explained in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya* 16.144, **147)**c

yata vidhi, nisedha—sakalai bhakti dasa ihate yahara duhkha, sei yaya nasa

visaya madandha saba e marma na jane suta dhana kula-made vaisnava na cine

“All the rules and regulations are servants of Bhakti. One who has trouble accepting this is destroyed. One who is blinded by false pride can never&a160;understand this secret. Being proud of his children, wealth, and high birth, he fails&a160;to recognize a Vaisnava.”

A devotee should avoid conversing with an atheist. As stated in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya* **17.19)**c

nagare haila kiba pasandi sambhasa ei va karane nahe prema parakasa

“Did I speak with an atheist in town? Is that why love of God is not manifesting today?”

Giving up relationships with nondevotees is most essential; Srila Advaita Prabhu gives the following statement in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya* **19.175)**c

yadi mora putra haya, haya va kinkara vaisnavaparadha muni na dekhon gocara

“Even if he is My son or servant, I will never see the face of a person who offends

Vaisnavas.”

There is no comparison between *bhakti* and pious activities. As explained in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya* 23.54):

prabhu bale,—tapah kari na karaha bala visnu-bhakti sarva-srestha janaha kevala

“The Lord said: Don't think you have become powerful by performing austerities. Know for certain that devotion to Lord Visnu is the highest goal.”

The hypocrites and cheaters sometimes advertise themselves as incarnations and thus increase their pride. A devotee should cautiously avoid their company. As&a160;stated in the *Caitanya-bhagavata (Adi* 14.82-83):

madhye madhye matra kata papi-gana giya loka nasta kare apanare laoyaiya

udara bharana lagi' papistha sakale raghunatha' kari' apanare keha bale

“Sometimes a group of evil persons would try to mislead people in general from the spiritual path with wrong advice. These sinners simply cheat people in order to fill their bellies by claiming to be Lord Rama.”

Devotees should constantly take shelter of the holy names while passing their lives without duplicity or sin. Their is no greater religious principle than this. The *Caitanya-bhagavata (Adi* 14.139-140) gives the following conclusion:

ataeva kali-yuga nama-yajna sara ara kona dharma kaile nahi haya para

ratri dina nama laya khaite suite tahara mahima vede nahi pare dite

“Therefore, in Kali-yuga chanting the holy name is the essential religious principle; no other religious practice can help one cross the material ocean of nescience.

Even the *Vedas* are unable to sufficiently glorify one who chants the Lord's holy name day and night in all situations.”

Human beings should worship Krsna by considering the natural qualities and accepting the livelihoods of the previous and later *mahajanas*. Pure devotional service is proportionately enhanced by following a proper occupation, otherwise it is never achieved.